



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

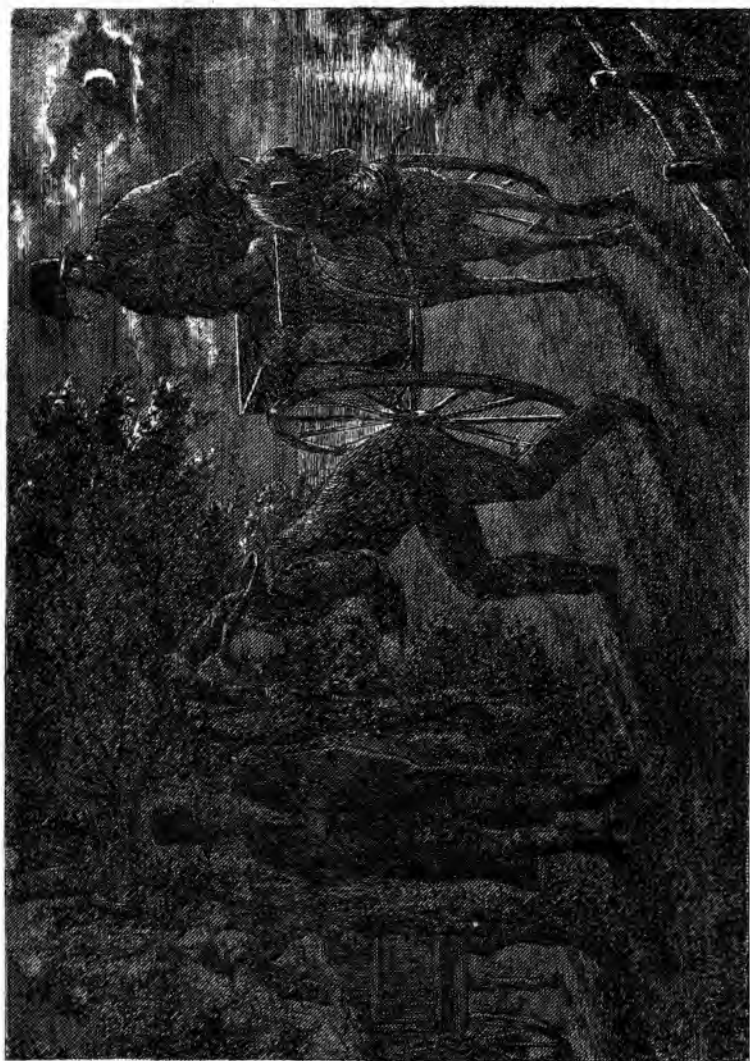
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





600053286U





CLARRY ROBERTSON

••F•

REMINISCENCES OF A REVENUE OFFICER.

135

LIONEL J. F. HUXHAM.

With Illustrations: Ours and Quotations by the Author.

[illegible]

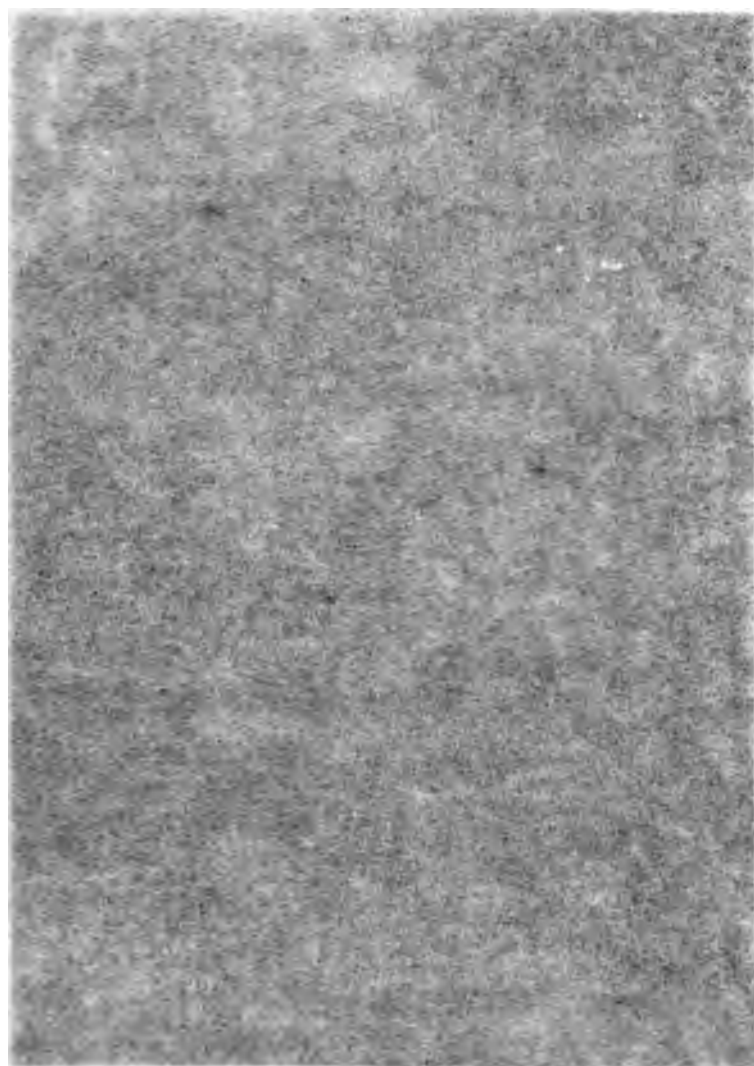
W. J. G. De G. (1997) *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* 90, 1001-1002.

...and the fact that the "new" style of clothing was no longer as "old-fashioned" as it once was. The "new" style of clothing was no longer as "old-fashioned" as it once was. The "new" style of clothing was no longer as "old-fashioned" as it once was.

LONGUET:

N₁ = 0.011 to 0.012, STATIONARY COEFFICIENT

249. 7. 000



HARRY ROUGHTON;

OR,

REMINISCENCES OF A REVENUE OFFICER.

BY

LIONEL J. F. HEXHAM.

With Illustrations Drawn and Engraved by the Author.

" 'Tis strange—but true; for truth is always strange:
Stranger than fiction: if it could be told,
How much would novels gain by the exchange!
How differently would men the world behold,
How oft would vice and virtue places change!
The new world would be nothing to the old,
If some Columbus i' the moral seas
Would show mankind their souls' antipodes"—Byron.

The artifices to which the smuggler resorts are of so subtle a character, as to present in their application proofs of the highest degree of ingenuity. Smuggling is no longer the bold profession of the daring contrabandists, who, until the close of the last century, landed their cargoes in defiance of the law, and resorted to open violence on the least show of resistance, but has degenerated into petty chicanery."—*Himmel's Laws of the Customs.*

LONDON:

SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO., STATIONERS' COURT.

1859.

249. y. 386.



Dedicated

[Sans permission]

Gracious Majesty of Queen

Allegiance loyalty and devotion:

able of Chancellor of the Exchequer,

image due to the Great Seal of

of Officers of the Court:

commissioners of Her Majesty's Customs,

in every sentiment of respect,

will commend itself to their approbation.

Knights, Vagabonds, Thieves, and Smugglers,

may tend to their amendment and reformation.

and

little, Gracious, General Reader.

In humble confidence that

in both of Interest, Amusement, and Instruction.

their most faithful Servants.

The Author.



STEREOTYPED AND PRINTED
BY WILLIAM MACKENZIE, 45 AND 47 HOWARD STREET,
GLASGOW.

Dedicated

[Sans permission]

To her Most Gracious Majesty y^e Queen,

With unfeigned loyalty and devotion;

To y^e Right Honourable y^e Chancellour of y^e Exchequer,

With all y^e homage due to y^e Chief Guardian of

y^e Coffers of y^e State;

To y^e Honourable y^e Commissioners of Her Majesty's Customs,

With every sentiment of respect,

Trusting that it will commend itself to their approbation:

To y^e Dishonourable y^e Rogues, Vagabonds, Thieves, and Smugglers,

In the hope that it may tend to their amendment and reformation:

and

To the Gentle, Generous, General Reader,

In humble confidence that

it will not be found devoid of Interest, Amusement, and Instruction:

By their most faithful Servitor,

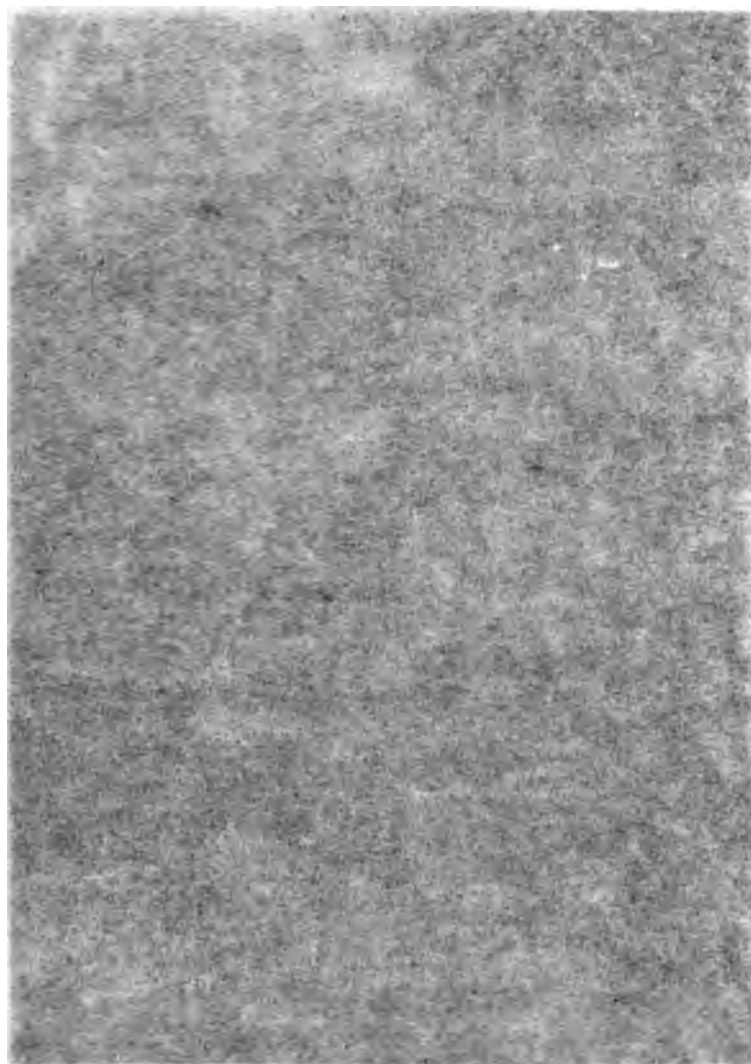
The Author.

P R E F A C E.

MANY a vagabond has commenced his career as a poacher, and ended it on the gibbet. Not that a poacher is of necessity an innate scoundrel, nor that the propensity to illicit sporting is heinous in itself, but, because its indulgence too often leads to something worse. His plea of justification is, that animals, *feræ naturæ*, are the property of no man until reduced into possession, the free gift of God to the great human family; and that the rich only tyrannize over the poor, when they arrogate to themselves exclusive dominion over the errant denizens of the woods and wilds. Grant, for the sake of argument, that it is usurpation, and that the law which sanctions it is despotic. If so, repeal it by legitimate means; but, so long as it is law, it is the duty of every good subject to obey it. However the specious pretext of natural justice, as opposed to legal right, may stifle the qualms of conscience, the non-qualified pursuer of hares, pheasants, and partridges, is not the less a law-breaker. The rubicon once passed, the distinctions between right and wrong grow less and less recognizable.







HARRY ROUGHTON;

OR,

REMINISCENCES OF A REVENUE OFFICER.

BY

LIONEL J. F. HEXHAM.

With Illustrations Drawn and Engraved by the Author.

"'Tis strange—but true; for truth is always strange;
Stranger than fiction: if it could be told,
How much would novels gain by the exchange!
How differently would men the world behold,
How oft would vice and virtue places change!
The new world would be nothing to the old,
If some Columbus of the moral seas
Would show mankind their souls' antipodes"—Byron.

The artifices to which the smuggler resorts are of so subtle a character, as to present in their application proofs of the highest degree of ingenuity. Smuggling is no longer the bold profession of the daring contrabandists, who, until the close of the last century, landed their cargoes in defiance of the law, and resorted to open violence on the least show of resistance, but has degenerated into petty chicanery."—*Himmel's Laws of the Customs.*

LONDON:

SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO., STATIONERS' COURT.

1859.

249. y. 386.



STEREOTYPED AND PRINTED
BY WILLIAM MACKENZIE, 45 AND 47 HOWARD STREET,
GLASGOW.

Dedicated

[Sans permission]

To her Most Gracious Majesty y^e Queen,

With unfeigned loyalty and devotion;

To y^e Right Honourable y^e Chancellor of y^e Exchequer,

With all y^e homage due to y^e Chief Guardian of

y^e Coffers of y^e State;

To y^e Honourable y^e Commissioners of Her Majesty's Customs,

With every sentiment of respect,

Trusting that it will commend itself to their approbation;

To y^e Dishonourable y^e Rogues, Vagabonds, Thieves, and Smugglers,

In the hope that it may tend to their amendment and reformation;

and

To the Gentle, Generous, General Reader,

In humble confidence that

it will not be found devoid of Interest, Amusement, and Instruction:

By their most faithful Servitor.

The Author.

spread and more pernicious in their effects upon society at large, than the evils which accompanied the more daring doings of the defunct smuggler-kings. The latter were comparatively few in number, and their visits, though not like angels', were "few and far between." No responsive hearts on shore beat in unison with those of the smuggler crew. They possessed neither hearth nor home in the bosom of their country; and, being under ban, few dared or desired to receive and bid them welcome. Their home was on the deep; and when they died, their influence died with them. When captured, it was only to undergo incarceration, or re-expatriation; and their radius of evil influence on society was circumscribed within very narrow limits. It is true they had accomplices on land, but these were the few monopolists of a nefarious trade, for which they found the capital, and who kept up a secret correspondence with their emissaries on the water—"There be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves." The land-thieves then, as in the present day on occasions of emergency, put in request the services of their poorer neighbours, who, allured by ample payment, and liberal distributions of illicit spirits, or actuated by the love of excitement, were too ready to lend their aid in the landing and concealment of smuggled goods; and sometimes a hand-to-hand or running fight ensued between them and the preventive force. But, in these days, the fraudulent offender against the revenue laws generally seeks to attain his purpose by taxing his ingenuity in the art of deception, until cunning, deceit, and falsehood become a part of his very nature, his everyday existence. The taint more or less affects all who are associated with him. The influence of his good or ill fortune casts its lights and shadows over other destinies than his own; affecting, alas! too often, the peace and prosperity of the helpless and the innocent, who

have no sympathy with his evil courses, and yet, perforce, must lend an unwilling hand towards the concealment, if not the furtherance, of his misdeeds. Secrecy is deemed by him to be a quality of the highest merit. He instils it into the minds of all around him ; kith and kin, dependents, all, are taught to practise it, at the expense of truth and of every cardinal virtue. These baneful influences eat like a canker-worm into the social system, lower the tone of morality, habituate the mind to hypocrisy and to the contemplation of petty fraud and deception, until, familiarized with the crooked paths of evil, crime is at length viewed with that indifference which is the last stepping-stone to its actual perpetration.

Many are the struggles which wives, children, brothers, friends, have to contend with, in their anxiety to screen offending 'husbands, fathers, or other dear relatives, whose detection and punishment must bring disgrace and ruin on them and on their families. To tell the truth would be to consign the offender to the hands of justice ; hence where such an one has gone astray, love, surmounting all regard for veracity, has drawn forth many a falsehood or evasion, from which the heart at first recoiled ; but deception is a treacherous reed. The deceiver is not to be trusted when his own interest in turn tempts him to betray those for whom he has been induced to lie ; for, when respect for veracity fails, a feebler appreciation of all other social virtues, as a natural consequence, ensues. Thus, when the disclosure of a hidden offence promises a higher bribe than secrecy can command, cupidity, despite the boasted adage of "honour among thieves," makes traitors of the offender's pseudo-bosom friends, and he falls a sacrifice to mercenary greed.

Heart-rending are the griefs and trials which fraud and indirection bring to the domestic hearth. Many a story

of distress and sorrow, lighted perchance, with here and there a sunny spot, is revealed to those whose painful duty it is to pursue the criminal, to investigate the details of his offence, and to trace through their various ramifications the attendant circumstances.

CHAPTER II.

"What can be sweeter than our native home,
Hither for ease and soft repose we come;
If thence we fly the cause admits no doubt,
None but an inmate foe can force us out."—**DRYDEN.**

"To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Tim'rous and slothful; yet he pleased the ear."—**MILTON.**

"Now Harry! if you can just put aside those great books for a minute, I will try on the little neckerchief I've been hemming for you."

These words were addressed to her husband by as cheerful and pretty a woman as ever gloried in the name of wife; and that husband was equally amiable and well-favoured. They were seated by the fire, in a snug little parlour from which a square window, consisting of a single pane of glass, enabled Harry to command a view of his shop, whenever he felt it necessary to pull aside the natty green gauze curtain that concealed it to get a peep at an incoming customer, or see that his apprentice was diligently occupied in compounding medicines or arranging fanciful packages of drugs, neatly labelled bottles, and other conventional decorations of a chemist's shop and laboratory.

Harry Roughton was a chemist and druggist, of some few years' standing, in an old seaport town. The books upon which he was engaged told the story of profit and

loss, and judging from his somewhat triumphant expression, the former evidently predominated.

"Just cleared seventy-two pounds this half-year, and all expenses paid; now for the neckerchief, Jane," was Harry's satisfied exclamation, as he threw down the pen upon his balance-sheet.

Jane tastefully adjusted the neckerchief with a jaunty little bow, turned her Harry's face towards the mirror over the mantelpiece, and playfully ejaculated, "Handsome as ever, Harry," confirming the assurance of her sincerity with a kiss. We will not dwell upon the nature of Harry's acknowledgment, doubtless he repaid her in kind; but rather contemplate the joyous pair reseated and congratulating each other on their thriving concern on the other side of the little square window; discussing the style of dress in which Harry intended his darling wife to figure on their next holiday-making; the spic-span new harness they had sometime meditated for Jane's pet pony; and the costume most becoming their two elder children, whose quiet repose left them to the undisturbed enjoyment of their "ain fireside."

'Twere pity that so much happiness should be broken in upon by any rude intruder, but a tap at the door communicating with the shop announced the arrival of a neighbour, whose introduction gave a turn to the conversation.

Well might the sudden interloper, Mr. Pitt, envy the young couple the perfect happiness they appeared to enjoy. The ruddy light of the fire danced and flickered in the stove; the flames played with the fanciful wreaths of smoke ever and anon blazing up and again resuming their curls of sober grey. Lights and shadows strove for the mastery as they described fantastic shapes and figures on the walls. The very tea-kettle, participating in the

general joy, sang cheerily on the hob; and the baby cradled at its mother's side made diverse ineffectual attempts to break through the soft slumber which Jane, in her solicitude to preserve, anticipated from time to time by the action of her coquettish little foot on the rocker. Many were the furtive glances, and many the blessings expressed or understood that she bestowed upon the charming little sleeper.

What prettier picture can be imagined than a lovely woman in the prime of youth and beauty, beaming with looks of love, such looks as a mother only can give when gazing with fond emotion on her sleeping charge. Many are the airy castles which the fertility of maternal imagination conjures up to fill the future of her darling child; prophetic visions too oft, alas, enjoyed only in the fond dreams of a mother's love.

But to return to Mr. Pitt. He did envy the young couple that domestic bliss which he possessed not the power to create nor the soul to enjoy himself, though perhaps not quite so powerless to destroy.

After playing carelessly with the open leaves of one of Charles Dickens' inimitables, which five minutes before had been destined to add another charm to their evening hours, Mr. Pitt drily observed, "I just popped in, Mr. Roughton, to ask you to lend me £50 for a few days."

"Fifty pounds!" exclaimed Harry, with a look of droll incredulity—and well he might—for Mr. Pitt in reality no more wanted £50 than *he* did, perhaps not so much.

"Ay, my good fellow, and if it were a hundred it would be none the worse. The fact is, the bank has been shut, as you know, these two hours, and one of our chums having disappointed us to-night, I should like to take his share of the venture, that's all."

Still, it seemed incomprehensible to Harry that a man

who could buy streets and build houses by dozens should come to him for a loan of fifty pounds.

All this was perfectly intelligible to the practised eye of Mr. Pitt, whose cold and unimpassioned gaze, though wearing the aspect of careless indifference, could read Harry's very thoughts; for Roughton's honest tell-tale countenance was as yet that of an innocent and unsophisticated man.

Pitt did not wait for Harry to give utterance to his sentiments, but coolly repeated, as if half-communing with himself, "Ay, I should like his venture, that's all;" adding, "It's a comfortable thing to double one's hundreds in eight-and-forty hours! that beats house-rents, banker's interest, and such-like, any day."

"I don't understand you," said Harry, after a moment's pause.

"No, no," said Mr. Pitt, "I dare say not, and perhaps it's as well you should not. You see you're well enough to do in the world, without getting rich over the left, though it be a quicker road to wealth; but never mind that, if you can help me to fifty or a hundred to-night I'll return it to-morrow. I can afford to give you ten per cent. for the twenty-four hours' accommodation, and clear eighty per cent. myself by the job then."

"A woman may forget her sucking child," and poor Jane may be forgiven even by the most immaculate of matrons, should they read this story, if, whilst with open mouth and eager ear she drank in every word that fell from the speaker's lips. She was deaf to the occasional rustle within the curtain of the cradle, and ceased even mechanically to move the toe that rested on the rocker. She watched her Harry with feverish anxiety as his face gradually relaxed into a good-humoured smile—a smile not bestowed upon herself but upon the wily Mr. Pitt.

How eagerly did she regard every movement of her husband's lips! How anxiously wait for his response! It came at length.

"But, if you can make eighty or a hundred per cent. of my money, Mr. Pitt, why shouldn't I?"

In an instant, as if by the most natural accident imaginable, Jane's elbow upset the volume of Dickens. In the pretended effort to save it, the little foot that had so often assiduously regulated the soothing motion of the cradle imparted a sudden shock to that infant dormitory, rousing its inmate, and evoking a startling overture of those quasi-sweet sounds, playfully called by doating mothers "the music of the nursery." Harry flew to the rescue. It was only the work of a moment to take up the little victim of simulated maternal carelessness and fold him soothingly in his father's arms. With a seemingly self-deprecating apology for her stupidity, and an assumed anxiety to remove a source of disturbance to their visitor, Jane exclaimed, "Pray, Harry, as you have the darling in your arms, carry him upstairs for me, and I'll lull him off to sleep." Up bounded Harry, followed by his wife bearing the berceauette under her arm. Scarcely was the threshold of the chamber gained before Jane, in low but eager accents, implored him to have nothing to do with that deep, designing man.

"And why not," retorted Roughton; "see what a fortune he has made!"

"Harry, Harry! do not deceive yourself; do not be deceived. Is not our business flourishing? Have you not told me this very night that we are above £70 in pocket on the last half-year, and honestly earned?"

Harry paused; his brow contracted, an inward struggle convulsed his frame; he strode rapidly up and down the room, suddenly stopped, gazed earnestly at his lovely wife

and essayed to speak, but his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth. She marked the busy working of the muscles of his face, and though he smiled, the intuitive perception of the woman saw at once that it was not the natural, winning, confiding smile that had so often cheered her even amidst the occasional cares, perplexities, and trials inseparable from domestic life in the happiest of homes.

"Harry," said she, "you are not yourself; I dread that plastic, insinuating man; he will lead you into mischief and to misery. Do, do for my sake, shun him and his dark speculations."

But, alas! the seeds of greedy avarice were sown in Harry's breast. His self-love was wounded by a wife's remonstrances, and though he felt their force, he was vexed that she should be so ready to discover and give warning of "breakers a-head," on which his own fancied superior judgment was about to suffer shipwreck. "Jane," said he, half-reproachfully, "what do you know of business? It is not for women to interpose their silly fears in a question between a beggarly five per cent. on a man's capital, and the cent. per cent. profits which strew the high road to fortune, of which others will successfully avail themselves if I don't. I'll do nothing unless I can see my way. Trust me, Jane! I never have deceived you yet. You had better remain here and take care of little Charley, and do you get to bed early if I don't return soon."

Lonely, if not alone, being scarcely conscious of the presence of the innocent babe whose soft repose she had so adroitly disturbed to gain a moment's conference with her Harry, Jane repeated to herself half mechanically, but in a tone of subdued grief, "better remain here." Shut out for the first time from the confidence of him who till now had never concealed anything from her, nor spurned her

advice, she uttered a deep sigh, but, after a brief pause, observed, "He may be right," and, resolving to distract her melancholy thoughts by occupation, did as hundreds do in like circumstances, for she sank listlessly into a chair, one hand within the other, and gazing vacantly through the window on the growing darkness of an autumnal night, gave herself up to melancholy brooding over this, the first inroad upon their domestic peace.

CHAPTER III.

"Where interest fortifies an argument,
Weak reason serves to gain the will's assent,
For souls already warped, receive an easy bent."—DRYDEN.

MR. PITT had drawn up his chair by the fire, in the corner just vacated by poor Jane, and, with his feet on the fender, sat as comfortably as if nothing had happened to disturb his colloquy, when Harry rejoined him. Pitt affected not to observe the somewhat uneasy expression of Harry's face, made some common-place remark, and left his newly-returned companion to resume the conversation, which an ordinary observer might have supposed Mr. Pitt had banished from his mind.

"Mrs. Roughton don't quite like that sort of business, Mr. Pitt," said Harry, after a pause.

"What business?" inquired Pitt, in a tone of seeming abstraction.

"Oh!" replied Harry impatiently, "I mean about the venture; she thinks I'd better have nothing to do with it."

"Well, I dare say she's right enough there," said Pitt, carelessly; "though women know nothing about business, they sometimes make a wise hit; my wife had the same silly scruples till she tasted the sweets of accruing wealth; but I don't think you're quite the man to make a clear game of it and pocket a little fortune, as I did, in about eighteen months;—you see it wants pluck and *nous* too; but there's

no reason why you should'nt lend me the trifle I named, nor why you should'nt double it; but let that pass; you may make a good profit on the loan, without letting your timid little wife into the secret at all till you've got your money back, and your ten per cent. to boot."

Harry gazed abstractedly on the glowing embers, whose light heightened the flush upon his burning cheek; "*Pluck, nous!*" muttered he to himself, mentally wincing at what he interpreted as an imputation on his courage and ability; and, as Pitt watched him stealthily, he saw doubt and irresolution as clearly depicted in Harry's face as cunning was in his own, but which Harry saw not. "I tell you what," said Pitt, "your snug fire makes one thirsty, I'm not much of a drinker, but if you've the bottle nigh, I should'nt mind having a drop of brandy and water."

This request was speedily complied with, and Mr. Pitt's civility prompted him to brew, as he called it, for both, and in nothing could his modesty be more apparent, than the moderation with which he regulated his own allowance, as compared with the "stiff bumper" he prepared for his companion.

"Your health, Mr. Roughton, and success, if you've no objection, to this night's campaign," said Mr. Pitt as he raised his glass, whilst Harry almost mechanically put his to his lips, and though not ordinarily a drinker to excess, he did not withdraw it until he had drained the contents.

"Pluck?" again repeated Harry in a half audible tone of self-interrogation; "I think I've as much pluck as you have, Mr. Pitt, and I don't see why I shouldn't have a cut in."

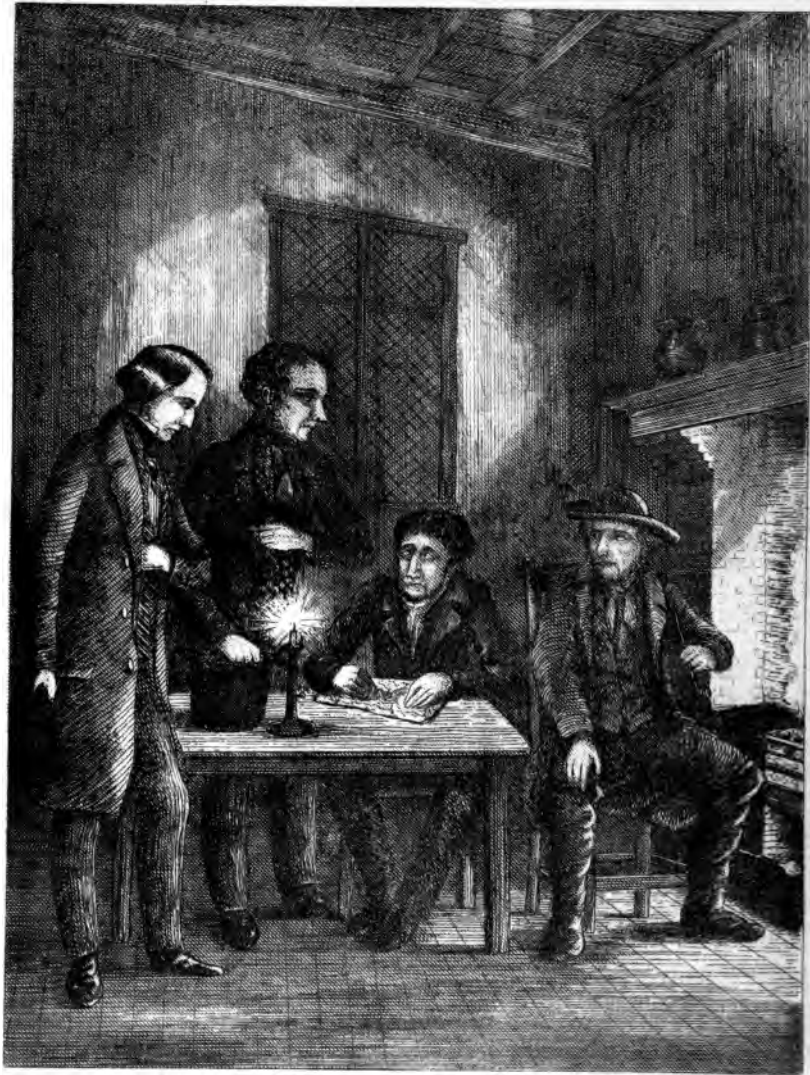
"Better not, better not," replied Pitt, "your wife won't be pleased, and I don't know whether it isn't good to be a little under petticoat government sometimes."

Harry again perceptibly winced at the insinuation, and,

involved in pitchy darkness. The outer door was approached by a rude stone staircase, crumbling, dark, and mouldy, from neglect and age. This door might have been somewhat difficult for a stranger to find in the dark, or to open, if he did find it; for, externally, it presented no handle, latch, or other visible appliance by which the uninitiated could gain access; nevertheless, the mysterious beings who bent their steps thither were sufficiently cognizant of the talismanic spring to obtain admission, as if by magic, disturbing neither friends within, nor neighbours without. Through this dreary portal the privileged visitors wended their way, carefully closing the door behind them, and, threading the dark but well-known intricacies of the passage and winding stair from thence to the upper chamber, they entered without ceremony the grim and miserable-looking apartment.

At the upper end of an old and dirty oaken table, sat a pallid meagre-visaged man, of about fifty, habited in a suit of rusty black, which, without injustice to his tailor, it could hardly be conceived was originally made for him, unless his lank limbs had sadly shrunk since that rusty suit was new. His face wore a melancholy and seedy aspect; whilst a peculiar cast in his eye imparted to it a somewhat sinister expression, which an observer might readily imagine was not much at variance with the real character of the man. This peculiarity was supposed to have earned for him the appropriate cognomen of "Swivel-eye;" though that by which he was usually accosted, in reference to his occasional vocation of quack medicine vender, was "Doctor."

Swiveleye's attention was rivetted on a soiled and dilapidated chart of the northern coast and the river that wound its way thither from beneath the walls of the house in which he sat. By the fire, lounged in an old walnut



P. 2.

The introduction.

chair a tall man, attired in a pea-jacket, coarse corduroy trousers, and mud boots of no ordinary dimensions. He was regaling himself with a short pipe, but suspended his puffing at intervals and listened attentively, as if in anxious expectation of some new arrival. Suddenly the door opened, and two persons presented themselves, one of whom was evidently too familiar with the place and its inmates to require any introduction; but not so his companion, who, with some uneasiness and evident misgiving, scanned the gloomy chamber and its occupants by the feeble rays of a solitary candle, and the flickering light of the fire, whose uncertain glimmer cast over the walls a mysterious glare, the effect of which was heightened by the gigantic shadows of the smoker and the doctor.

"Halloo, Jem!" exclaimed the elder of the new comers, addressing him of the mud boots, "here's a new comrade, who has made up his mind to have a cut in with us."

"Humph!" ejaculated Jem, as he scrutinized Harry Roughton from head to heel, "he looks more like a sleeping partner than a go-a-head chum for us."

"Never mind," replied Pitt, "I'll warrant he's got pluck enough, and," with a significant glance and a sly touch of his pocket, "other valuable qualifications."

"Well," said Jem, "it won't be long before we see what sort of stuff he's made of; and, as we hav'nt much time to lose, the sooner he gets his christening the better; so doctor, out with that half-anker and some glasses."

Swiveleye rose, and produced a little keg of spirits from an obscure corner of the room, and, placing a large brown jug of water, with a few tumblers, on the table, resumed his scrutiny of the chart.

Pitt busied himself with filling the glasses, and having placed one opposite to Jem, and another before Harry, he proceeded to brew for the doctor; but Swiveleye, with a

degree of caution peculiar to his character, declined, significantly hinting that he might perhaps have enough to do in that way before midnight. He then proceeded to fold up his map, and envelop himself in an old bottle-green top-coat and muffler.

"It's time Jack was here," said Swiveleye, and scarcely had he spoken the words when an elastic step was heard bounding up the staircase, and Jack Golightly, a lad of about sixteen, entered the room, and, after exchanging a few words in a low tone with old Jem, quickly retired with the doctor.

There was something extremely forbidding in the aspect of Harry's new acquaintances and their dreary dirty abode. A feeling of repugnance and disgust crept over him in spite of himself, though the brandy and water he had taken, and the raw spirits he was now imbibing, together with the conviction that he had gone too far to retract, stifled the oft-recurring inclination to repudiate the undertaking, and renounce his new associates.

"We shall have a dirty night on't," said Jem; "its time to be off, so another glass and away."

They each bottomed a tumbler, and, stealthily as they entered, quitted the house.

CHAPTER V.

.. Swift-gliding mists the dusky fields invade,
To thieves more grateful than the midnight shade."—POPE: HOM.

"A light. It is at a distance, (if I can
Measure in darkness distance,) but it blinks
As through a crevice, or a keyhole, in
The inhibited direction."—BYRON.

IT was a miserable foggy November night, scarcely a breath of air was stirring, and the stillness was broken only by the monotonous roar of the waves as they tumbled and rolled along the shelving beach below Saltholme cliffs. A solitary being, attired in a blue uniform bedight with gilt buttons, pursued, with slow and measured step, the narrow pathway which winds along the top of the cliffs, often approaching, in dangerous proximity, to the edge; but the poor coast-guard patrol appeared to have become too familiar with his dull route, to incur much risk of deviation from the beaten path. If, in these drowsy night rambles, his mind was ever active enough to think at all, his thought would naturally be—"What's the use of my being exposed hour after hour to the chilling blast, pacing to and fro, over the same ground like a horse in a mill." But, use or no use, he had the consolation of knowing that so long as he could pursue this wearisome vocation, his guinea a week was secure, and himself and family above want. It did happen sometimes that this dull monotony was relieved

by the approach of a stray traveller, sufficiently well acquainted with the cliff to venture to take advantage of the mile or two saved, by availing himself of it instead of following the turnpike road to town. This was destined to be one of his relief-nights, as he called them, for, no sooner had he reached for the fifth time, the limit of his beat, than he heard or thought he heard an approaching footstep. Turning round to resume his listless march, a faint sound reached his ear; it was a tone suggestive of misery rather than a call of distress, and he listened attentively. Presently a tall spare figure approached, with limping feeble gait, and, in a timid, half-inquiring accent, muttered, "coast-guard?"

"Ay, ay," replied the man of the blue jacket and gilt buttons.

Immediately after this brief response he heard the tall figure fall heavily on the greensward. Approaching cautiously, the patrol opened the slide of his lantern, and throwing its rays upon the face of the prostrate man, discovered the pale emaciated features of a miserable looking being, the expression of whose countenance betokened pain and exhaustion.

"Who are you, and what's the matter?" asked the coast-guard.

"Give me a lift," replied the wretched man, holding up his thin cold hand, "I'm an unfortunate doctor, fatigued and benighted and faint; is there any house nigh at hand?"

Cheerfully did the patrol extend his aid; he raised the feeble man, drew one arm through his, and offered to assist him to the "Ship and Anchor," about half a mile distant. The proffered help was thankfully accepted, and the coast-guard led the way, lighting the path with his lantern as they advanced, until they reached the little roadside inn.

The doctor had leaned heavily on his companion, and though the distance was not great, the latter was somewhat fatigued by the exertion, and nothing loth to accept a glass of grog in return for the aid he had so cheerfully given. They entered the alluring kitchen, seated themselves before the blazing fire and called for brandy and water. The last guest of the little tavern had just departed, and the notable little landlady was busying herself in clearing away, all the time impatiently expecting the return of her husband from the fisherman's club. So the two guests had the kitchen corner to themselves. The doctor reclined in a chair near the table, and certainly presented so woebegone and wretched an appearance, that one might readily believe the brandy and water was to him, not only a welcome, but necessary stimulant. As he tremblingly stretched out his hand towards his glass, he asked the patrol if he would oblige him by opening the little wallet he had left near the door, and give him the small bottle which he would find in it. The patrol obeyed with alacrity, and handed over a phial marked "Bond's Reviving Cordial," which the doctor hastily seized, and, having poured into his glass a few drops, he requested the patrol to replace the phial, during which operation the doctor adroitly changed the position of the two glasses. In two more minutes, pledging one another, each drank a deep draught to his companion's health and better acquaintance, and approached a step or two nearer the blazing hearth. Unable to resist the sudden drowsiness which came over him, the patrol speedily sank into a profound slumber. .

By the light of the fire, the doctor's keen eye had detected a cunning little visage peeping through the corner pane of the yet unshuttered window. Pointing knowingly to the drowsy head hanging heavily on the blue and gilt covered chest, and stealthily emptying into the ashes

the dregs of the coast-guard man's glass, he again put his own unfinished one in its place.

The hostess of the humble tavern, who saw nothing extraordinary in the drowsiness of a poor fellow, who had just exchanged the chilling atmosphere of a cold November night for the comfort of a warm hearth and a jorum of hot brandy and water, complacently remarked—"Poor fellow, how he snores!"

"Ay," said the doctor, "it's a pity to wake him till he has had half an hour's nap, or so. I'm sorry I can't stay to bid him good night, and thank him for his kindness. I'm obliged to be moving, so just tell him when he wakes that I couldn't stop any longer, and that I'm under great obligations to him for accompanying me here." Then, paying for the grog, and throwing down an extra half-crown, he added—"If it aint against the rules of the gov'nment give him that; but, if he wont take it, why keep it yourself, and there's no harm done, so good night,"—and away went the doctor with his wallet.

Meanwhile, a busy scene was being transacted on the spot from whence the unsuspecting slumberer had been wheedled away by the wily doctor. Little did that kind-hearted slumberer dream how the abominable impostor had practised on his benevolence, or of the impending consequences in which he had been thus heedlessly and heartlessly involved.

The face which the artful doctor had recognized peering through the corner of the inn window, was no other than that of the hopeful Jack Golightly, who had silently dodged the steps of the doctor and his guide, whilst the flickering lantern of the latter, as he threaded his way to the inn on his benevolent mission, had been one of the preconcerted signals for the smugglers. Jack, having followed merely to assure himself of the full success of the

doctor and his drugs, hurried back to the cliffs, found old Jem at his post, and whispered in his ear—"All right, as sound as a top." With no other reply than an almost inaudible but satisfied grunt, Jem dropped down the edge of the cliff to a projecting piece of rock, and, turning a dark lantern seaward, carefully opened it for a second and closed it again, repeating this operation three times at distinct intervals; he then gazed earnestly into the dark fog that hung over the water until he saw a precisely similar signal exhibited in the distance; he then reopened his lantern, waved it to and fro two or three times, closed it again and waited a few seconds; this movement was repeated from the same spot, when Jem, quitting his position on the rock, descended to the beach, and Jack noiselessly slunk away. He, however, quickly returned, accompanied by Pitt, Harry, and two men with a cart and horses. Roughton took up his station by the cart, and Jem near the water's edge, whilst Pitt and the two carters planted themselves at equal distances between the edge of the cliff and the beach. These arrangements made, Jack stealthily prowled round the adjacent fields to keep watch and ward against any surprise. The plash of oars was heard upon the water, and in a few minutes the keel of a boat grated harshly on the shingle; after which, in an incredibly short space of time, sixty or seventy bales of tobacco were handed up from man to man and deposited in the cart.

Scarcely was the work completed when Swiveleye and Jack came up in breathless haste, and the well-imitated cry of a little nightbird was heard. At this sound the boat shoved off again, the whip was unsparingly applied to the poor horses, and, thanks to the soft greenward, the cart was borne noiselessly away. Every man had disappeared from the scene of action with surprising

alacrity. As the cart diverged from the open field into the high road, Jack, who had perched himself on the summit of the load, descried lights dancing about the spot they had so recently quitted, and, calculating that the track of the cart would lead the enemy in pursuit, they made with all haste for the turnpike road, along which they dashed off at their best speed.

CHAPTER VI.

"I told the clocks, and watched the wasting light,
And listened to each softly-treading step,
In hopes 'twas he; but still it was not he.
At last he came, but with such altered looks,
So wild, so ghastly, as some ghost had met him,
All pale and speechless."

DRYDEN.

WE left poor Mrs. Roughton, or, more properly speaking, her much-loved Harry had left her, to the loneliness of her chamber, and to the painful meditations which Mr. Pitt's sudden inroad on their domestic bliss had given rise to. It would be impossible to describe the painful emotions which racked the bosom of the fond and affectionate wife, as she revolved in her distracted mind the events which had, for the first time, placed a barrier between her and her hitherto devoted and confiding husband. Until this moment she had been a participator, if not in every thought that passed through her Harry's mind, in every action which could in any way exercise an influence over the domestic affairs of their little household; in every step which had a bearing upon Harry's business relations, or which could affect their prosperity and happiness; and no secrets had been hidden from each other. This unlimited confidence had hitherto tended not only to promote their success in life, but had contributed to that harmony of thought and undisturbed repose which constitute the chief charm of the married state. Until this fatal evening their whole happiness had been con-

centrated in each other; they had no aspirations beyond themselves and their darling children, who made up their "little kingdom of love at home"—that home which was all the world to them. In her reverie she dwelt upon these things, and, despite the heartrending reverse which had that evening given to her Harry's character a new complexion, she recalled the ten thousand endearments and affectionate attentions which had bound so indissolubly her young and trustful heart to the husband of her choice. She fain would have persuaded herself that the events of this evening were all a dream; that Harry was the same as ever; that he would, after a little reflection, cast off the folds of the ensnaring serpent that had for a moment fascinated him; that his better judgment would surmount the wild temptation and restore him to her, freed from the wiles of the wary villain whom she had left below. She fancied every little noise that broke upon the stillness of the night was her Harry's footstep. She listened again and again, only to suffer the anguish of reiterated disappointment, little dreaming that it was something more than the personal attractions of the coarse and repulsive wretch who had assailed and held him spell-bound. She did not see that the deadly passion, greed, had taken possession of his soul, and that the recklessness of the gambler was, with resistless tenacity, usurping the seat of reason. Ever and anon the faint jingle of glasses reached her ear, but having confidence in her husband's discretion and sobriety, she could not deem his accustomed hospitality a crime, nor for a moment wish that he should deny it even to a man like Mr. Pitt.

Still, she half reproached herself for her confiding supineness, and resolved from time to time to descend once more and interpose the influence of her presence

between Harry and the danger which beset him; but again his last words came ringing in her ears—"Better remain here." She recalled the unnatural tone in which that injunction had been uttered, the strange look of determination which accompanied it, and recoiled from the task of interference. Then again flashed across her mind his assurance—"Trust me, Jane, I have never deceived you yet;" she felt the force of this truth, for it was a truth; she thought of his last parting kiss and took courage, but stirred not from her seat. Presently she heard the movement of chairs, a few words too indistinct to convey their meaning to her anxious ears, and the closing of the outer door.

"Thank God!" she exclaimed, "that man is gone, and Harry will return to reason and to me." She burst into a flood of tears—tears in which the wounded heart sometimes finds relief; but, alas! her sobs were uninterrupted by any hopeful sound. Awaking to a sense of the painful reality, she rushed down to the little sitting-room, and found the confirmation of her fears in the solitude of that deserted chamber. The empty bottle and the dirty glasses, dimly visible in the waning light of the ashy embers, stood like spectres on the table; the chair which Harry had vacated was upset on the hearth; the candles had expired in their sockets; the very table-cloth, usually so neat, hung all awry; the door which led into the shop was left ajar, and all beyond it darkness—but deeper and more intense was the darkness which pervaded the desolate heart of the lately cheerful and unsuspecting wife.

"And he is gone!" she uttered, in a sepulchral voice, "gone!"—and, in a fit of distraction she fled back to her room, where, heedless of her sleeping infant, she seized her bonnet and shawl, with a resolute determination to pursue and bring back the fugitive to his deserted home.

She reached the front door and found it locked. There stood the trembling wife, a prisoner and alone. Her first impulse was to apply her tiny strength to the forcing of the door, but, pending this vain effort, the next thought was—"Where, where should I find him were I free to follow?" and she gave up this last hope in a paroxysm of despair. She, who at another time would not have dared after dark to thread the mazes of the town without her protecting husband's arm, was now only deterred from the perils of a nightly ramble through the yawning streets by the utter hopelessness of the task, and the barrier which that husband had unwittingly interposed between her and her purpose.

Grieved, ay, broken-hearted, Jane returned to her chamber, clasped her sleeping infant in her arms, and folding him in her shawl, she paced her dreary apartment, a prey to agony and bewildering emotions. A thousand times unconsciously she kissed the nestling infant, as, with disordered step, she paced the floor, starting at every sound, and relapsing again into her painful reverie, rendered tenfold more painful by the mystery which her simple heart could not unravel. Her notions of the engagement into which her husband had been led, carried her thoughts little further than the vague idea of some clandestine meeting for the settlement of a contraband speculation; it never crossed her inexperienced mind that her Harry was daring the fury of the elements on the bleak and dreary shore, or perhaps engaged in deadly conflict with the guardians of the coast, or reason might have failed her in this hour of peril, this first real trial of her life. As it was, her sorrows were overwhelming, and we will not trace them through the weary hours which at length began to usher in the dawn, when her ear caught the sound of a weary but familiar step, which, ceas-

ing for a moment, was succeeded by the click of the front-door lock. A few minutes more, and, feeble and exhausted, Jane hung cold and, to all appearance, lifeless, in her husband's arms. He laid her gently on the bed, and gazed on that pale, changed visage with feelings of bitter self-reproach and deep remorse, though stupified by sheer fatigue and mental distraction. As he realized the misery of which he was the author and felt the necessity for exertion, he flew down stairs to procure a restorative for his fainting wife; the brandy bottle stood where he had left it the night before; he seized it, and saw that it was empty; another pang of reproach struck upon his heart; he dropped the bottle from his hands, and, leaving the broken fragments on the hearth, ran back to the chamber, and, as his only resource, chafed her temples and hands till returning animation restored her once more to a consciousness of the miseries she had endured, and to the conviction that he who stood beside her had not escaped unscathed through the horrors of that night. Drenched to the skin, benumbed with cold, and covered with mud and dirt, there stood her once neat, clean, and wholesome-looking Harry—haggard, pale, and stolid as a roué after a night's debauch, his teeth chattering in his head, and his limbs trembling with fatigue and the distressing reaction which supervenes after great exertion and the excitement of a nervous frame.

Jane's impulses for the time assumed a new direction, and, despite all the past, forgetting herself in her anxiety for him, she seemed to gain strength with every effort to give relief to her truant husband. When the hour arrived at which honest men generally rise for the business of the day, poor Jane was tucking up the sheets and blankets in which her Harry had just rolled himself, and unconscious or forgetful that sleep had not visited his poor

wife's eyelids since his departure, he fell into a heavy slumber.

"What a Sunday morning!" exclaimed Jane, as she sank in a chair by the bedside—"What a Sunday morning to us who have never turned night into day, nor had cause before to neglect our Sabbath duties."

CHAPTER VII.

"We ran like the winds and matchless was our course,
Now sweeping o'er the summit of a hill,
Now with a full career came thund'ring down
The precipice, and swept along the plain."—LEE.

HAVING somewhat anticipated our story, we must now return to the vicinity of the coast. As already related, the busy actors in the clandestine landing of the tobacco, had been suddenly dispersed, in consequence of an alarm communicated by the almost ubiquitous and very precocious Jack Golightly. His eagle eye had discovered, looming through the haze, the portly figure of the inspecting lieutenant of the coast-guard, and, without waiting to ascertain whether the officer was followed by any of his men, he had tripped stealthily up to the edge of the cliff, where he fell in with old Swiveleye on his way, and made the talismanic signal, which had put the whole band in motion, so that, when the lieutenant arrived at the deserted beat of the patrol, he shouted in vain for his absent sentinel. Suspecting nothing but neglect of duty, he drew his cloak around him, and with the vague idea that a dram would not be unacceptable on such a night, it struck him that Rogers had, for so pardonable a purpose, sought the adjacent inn, towards which he sauntered, with the laudable intention of administering a severe rebuke to his truant officer. Arrived at the "Ship and Anchor," he had hardly placed his fingers on the latch of

the door, when he was assailed by a volume of abuse from the saucy landlady, who mistook his approach for that of her husband, and, judging from his fumbling with the latch, that he had indulged rather more than usual, she rated the new comer soundly ; but, as the door opened, and the corpulent chest and glittering uniform of the lieutenant met her eye, her tone as suddenly assumed its accustomed blandness. With many awkward apologies, she proceeded to explain her mistake, interspersing her explanation with sundry maledictions against her offending lord and master.

"Well! well!" replied the lieutenant, with cool indifference, "rather late hours these for a solitary house like yours, Mrs. Jones."

"Ay, late enough," said she, breaking out again into a fresh torrent of abuse against her dissolute spouse, yet, notwithstanding this noisy flood of vituperation, in a key as shrill as a boatswain's whistle, poor Rogers slept on as unconcernedly as a drunken sailor in his hammock. The lieutenant gazed in astonishment at him who had ever been a model of sobriety and good conduct, as honest and diligent a man as any in her Majesty's service, and chargeable with no faults, except, perhaps, a little want of that shrewdness and tact, which ought to enter largely into the composition of an efficient preventive officer.

"Drunk!" exclaimed the lieutenant, and, stepping up to the slumbering lump of frail humanity, he shouted in his ear with the voice of a Stentor, at which Rogers raised his drooping head without opening his eyes, and muttered a few almost inarticulate words, not remarkable for elegance of diction, nor very palatable to an officer, accustomed only to the most scrupulous respect from his subordinates. The lieutenant seized him by the collar and shook him as a lion would shake his prey. Roused to consciousness,



P. 86

The slumber.

the poor fellow distended his drowsy pupils, and, gradually realizing the presence and full proportions of his commanding officer, by a sudden effort rose bolt upright before him, mechanically gave the accustomed official salute, dropped his hands to his sides, and, in the attitude of attention, waited orders.

"Rogers!" said the lieutenant in a stern voice, "What brought you here, eh? drunk at the 'Ship and Anchor' instead of being at your post!—Follow me, to-morrow I'll report you; your berth isn't worth an hour's purchase."

The shock acted partially as an antidote, the straggling faculties of poor Rogers were slowly recovering themselves, and he staggered and trembled under the influence of some undefined apprehension of impending evil.

"I hope, Sir," said he, "I may explain to-morrow;" and, not trusting himself to say more, moodily prepared to follow. During this colloquy the hostess stood mute; but seeing that matters were growing serious, and fully conscious that her cellar had been guiltless of the offender's intoxication, she applied herself to the vindication of the honour of the "Ship and Anchor," to which the lieutenant listened with commendable patience. When, however, she entered upon the particulars of Rogers' arrival, in company with the sick man, the solitary glass imbibed by each, the sudden stupor which had prostrated the penitent patrol, and the somewhat hasty departure of the feeble fainting man, leaving his previously sober, strong, and benevolent guide behind, the lieutenant greedily devoured every word, occasionally urging her on with the impatient interrogation, "What next?" until he knew the whole story, when some suspicion of the truth dawned upon him. Forgetting for the moment the delinquency of Swiveleye's unfortunate dupe, he departed in hot haste, saying, "Come along Rogers, quick," and the poor fellow blundered after him through

the cold and drizzling mist. Pondering over the narrative, the lieutenant hurried on at a rapid pace, followed by Rogers, who with each inspiration of the cold air, and his exertion to keep up with his superior, felt himself gradually becoming freer from the torpor which had overcome him, so that by the time they reached the station, and half a dozen more men had been put in requisition, Rogers had become almost as alert as the best of them.

The little band was soon in motion, and, having reached the landing-place, by the aid of their lanterns speedily discovered traces of footprints from cliff to sand and shingle, and from sand to cliff, as well as the tell-tale marks of the broad-wheeled cart and horses' hoofs on the heights above. Dispersing themselves to make sure that no wheel track should escape them, they proceeded, with eyes intent and lanterns directed to the greensward, in full pursuit of the fugitives. It was the glimmer of the lights in this preliminary exploration, that, having caught the keen eye of Golightly, as the cart diverged towards the high road, had so vigorously expedited the movements of the smugglers. Old Jem, Harry Roughton, and Swiveleye had taken a shorter route towards the place of rendezvous, than that which, from the nature of the road, the cart was obliged to pursue, though up to a given point their path was the same; at this point of divergence the ground was too hard, from the proximity of the chalkstone to the surface, to bear more than a thin scanty herbage or moss, and was too impervious to wheel-tire or horse-hoof to leave any track discoverable by the uncertain lights of the pursuers. Here coming to a halt they held a brief council, which ended in a resolution to take a wider field of observation.

"Halloo," exclaimed one of the men in advance, "we're on the scent again."

In a few seconds all were clustering round the spot, where

one of the little band had stumbled upon a jack-boot whose fellow lay a little beyond, as if they had been kicked off one after the other in the haste and confusion of flight, both of them bedabbled with mud, sand, and salt-water. On sped the party in the direction indicated by these leathern trophies, until the footprints of the pursued brought their eager pursuers once more to a stand still against the rugged face of a stratum of rock, which showed unmistakable traces of having been recently scaled. With the agility of mountain cats, three or four fellows were making their way to the summit, a feat which the bulky lieutenant found himself unable to achieve with equal celerity, and, whilst endeavouring to haul himself up a rather precipitous shelf of rock, the sudden thought dawned upon him that nothing less than magic could have borne a cart and horses over this rugged impediment. Holding on, therefore, till he had recovered his breath a little, he invited their attention to the fact that, in their eagerness to follow the route of the jack-boots, they had lost sight of the heavy cart, which was much more likely to be overtaken than the light-heeled gentry who had taken a road passable only to agile pedestrians. Another council of war was the necessary consequence, and this resolved itself into a separation of the party into two divisions. Those who could best scale the rocks were despatched in pursuit of the runaways, whilst the lieutenant and three of his men retraced their steps to the whereabouts of the jack-boots, and thence, after a tedious search, into the wheel-tracks of the cart, and, by their aid, to the turnpike road. Hard as granite, the macadamized highway furnished no indication, whether the object of their search had turned to the right or to the left. Another council was held, in which poor Rogers showed his sagacity, by hinting that a cart from the sea-shore was hardly likely to return to the same locality,

whereupon they decided on turning their faces inland. The wisdom of this suggestion was speedily proved by the discovery of parallel indentations across the turf to the roadside hovel of a farm homestead, where they found an empty cart, bearing unmistakable evidence of a recent transit across the greensward they had just traversed; the tackle was thrown in a heap in the corner, the pads of the saddles still teeming with perspiration, and the collars and breeching covered with white foam. Passing through the gate of the adjacent field, they found the poor jaded horses grazing as if nothing had happened, save that their coats were reeking with sweat and all curled and rough, whilst the bridle, which still hung on the head of one of them, gave evident proof of the haste with which the poor brutes had been turned out.

"Call up old Brookes," cried the lieutenant; "search the stackyard and the barns; examine the haylofts and turn over that heap of manure; we must have the tobacco. Rouse up old Brookes, I say."

A thundering knock resounded on the oaken door, and a moment after the farmer's rubicund face, surmounted by the ample folds of a great cotton nightcap and tassel, peered through an open window above, with a most bewildered gaze. "What's the matter now?" bawled out old Brookes.

"Matter enough," retorted the lieutenant; "down this minute and let us in, either you or some of your folks. Down with you, I say, in the name of the queen."

The farmer quickly made his grotesque toilet and showed himself at the front door, enveloped in an old great coat, with a red handkerchief muffled round his throat, his leather smalls and a pair of clog shoes without stockings. The bluff honest face of old Brookes showed evident symptoms of manly displeasure at this untimely intrusion; but no sign

of guilt marked his open countenance, or exhibited itself in the tones of his firm deep voice. "Come in," said the old man; "for it's rather coolish here, gen'lmen."

Placing one man at the back and another at the front of the house, the lieutenant, followed by Rogers, walked into the spacious kitchen; the farmer applied two or three lusty blows of the poker to a large block of coal resting on the embers, and was rewarded by a cheerful blaze, grateful enough to those who drew around it.

The lieutenant soon told the object of his visit; and, notwithstanding the manifest uneasiness with which the farmer heard the story of the cart and horses, his countenance betrayed nothing to excite suspicion, though it exhibited an occasional scowl or flash of anger.

"Well," said he, after a long pause of rumination, "if you please, gen'lmen, follow me;" and taking a lighted candle, he led the way to the dormitory of his two men-servants, whom he found apparently fast asleep on their truckle bedstead. Having scrutinized the slumberers for a moment, he scratched his head, and in a satisfied manner observed—"I'm deceived for once, and I'm glad on't." After another pause, he turned to the lieutenant and added—"From your account, master, I rayther suspected my chaps might ha' had a hand in't; but when I come to think, anybody might ha' got at my cart and horses without them;" and so saying, he was about to quit the room, when his eye fell upon a pair of dirty boots and a damp smock-frock. In a moment the mystery was unravelled. Seizing the fellow next to him by the shoulder, the old farmer roared with a voice of thunder—"Up, ye louts; let's ha' none o' your shammin'; wake up, I tell'ee."

The fellow struggled in his master's grasp, but that grasp was like the grip of a vice, and he bawled out—

"Well, maister, ye need no' pinch so hard;" then imparting a sharp nudge to his bedfellow, he grumbled—"Come Tom, lad, ye maun get up, d'ye hear."

With a well-affected stare, and rubbing his eyes with his knuckles, Tom raised his head and sat upright in bed, asking with an air of astonished stupidity—"What be the matter?"

"Get up, I tell'ee," said the farmer; "thee'll soon find out, if thee doesn't know a'ready;" and, with a somewhat uneasy glance at the lieutenant and his man, they proceeded to put on their clothes, whilst the old farmer and the officers of the coast-guard quietly looked on. As Tom picked up his corduroys the farmer detected the heavy chink of money.

"Ah! Tom," said he, "thee be'est suddenly rich, I think; thee'st not often for'ard in cash, and thee'st drawn no wages o' late;" then suddenly stepping up, he thrust his hand into the treacherous pocket and drew forth a handful of gold and silver. Shrewdly guessing that both had fared alike, he made a similar scrutiny of Charley's pockets, though not with a like result. "This be the hire o' my cart and horses, be it? I'll take care o' this for thee till accounts be settled." Tom looked foolish, but Charley hinted that they could give a good account of how they came by their money, adding, with sullen impertinence—"Some folks might repent yet o' picking other folks' pockets." The farmer's blood was up, though a triumphant vein of humour pervaded his tone and actions.

"Thy smalls seem rayther damp," said the old man, as he rubbed his rough hand down the extremities of the corduroys; "how come they so wet, eh?"

"Why, didn't you send me off last thing to look arter that cow down i' the meadows there last night, and aint it up to the knees in mud and dirt?" growled the man.

"Na, 'twont do, Charley; and if 'twould, why 'twouldn't a dirtied Tom's boots an' toggery as well, thee know'st."

Thus the old man bantered the slovenly knaves, till they were ready to descend; then, turning to the lieutenant, said—"Well! I think, Sir, thee see'st how matters stand, and if thee and thy man 'll jist take care on 'em, I'll light thee down," and suiting the action to the words, he led the way to the kitchen. Here a long string of interrogatories was put to the culprits, but not a word savouring of admission could be extorted. They declared they knew nothing of the unwarrantable use made of their master's cart and horses, nor anything about the "job," as they called it. The farmer grew angry, and the lieutenant became puzzled at the look of stolid indifference which the two country bumpkins assumed, and the simplicity of the replies with which they ingeniously fenced every question. The lieutenant condescended to step aside and consult with Rogers as to the risk of taking the two men into custody; whilst the farmer, with his hands on his knees and his eyes gazing on vacancy, seemed to be absorbed in deep thought. At length an idea crossed his mind, and turning round he abruptly asked—"Who supped the hosses up last night?"

"Me, Sir," said Tom.

"An' what didst thee do with the key, lad?"

Tom, taken by surprise, suddenly put his hand to his pocket, but as suddenly recovering himself, stammered out—"I—I hang'd it up in its place, Sir."

Tom's involuntary touch of his pocket had not escaped the observant eye of the old farmer, who, suddenly rising and confronting Tom, said—"Gi'e it me, and none o' yer gammon; out wi' it, or I'll ha' it by force."

Tom's jaw dropped, his eye quailed under the farmer's

resolute frown, he fell upon his knees and craved pardon. Charley looked daggers at his companion.

"Get up, mon, and gi'e me the key."

Tom rose, drew the key from his pocket, and, trembling in every limb, handed it to his master.

"Be sure thee sins 'll find thee out," said the old man; "there's always some'at to detect a rogue; and if thee'dst hung that key in its place I might ha' 'spected that somebody else had picked the lock to get at my tackle."

The lieutenant's colloquy with Rogers had been interrupted by this incident, and all doubt being cleared up, he called in the two sentinels from their outposts and gave the men in charge. After a parley by the kitchen fire and a draught of the farmer's ale, the lieutenant gave the old man a hearty shake by the hand, and with many apologies and thanks, bore off the prisoners to the station. Morning dawned as the two captives and their escort neared the town, when, from a roadside gate, a youth came up with a truss of hay on his shoulder, and trudged unconcernedly along by their side. He had not proceeded far before he dropped his load and sang out—"Bear a hand here, will you, one o' you chaps, and help me up with this, or our cattle will come short this morning." Whether Charley recognized the voice or not, he, apparently forgetting his own trouble, turned round with alacrity to give the poor lad a lift. Whilst replacing the load on the lad's shoulders, Charley's ears caught the whispered words—"Hold your tongues, come what may, and there's £20 a-piece." "Come along," cried the coast-guard, and they parted company with the farmer's boy and his truss of hay.

CHAPTER VIII.

"He finds uncertain ways unsafest are,
And doubt a greater mischief than despair;
Then to the stream where neither friends nor force,
Nor speed, nor art avail, he shapes his course."—DENHAM.

"His bold head
'Bove the contentious waves he kept, and oar'd
Himself with his good arms in lusty strokes
To th' shore."
SHAKESPEARE.

It must not be forgotten that there were other *dramatis personæ* in the act described in our last chapter, who form too important a link in the chain of the narrative to be overlooked. The last thing we saw in connection with old Jem was his pair of jack-boots. Although no traces of Roughton individually presented themselves, he was not lost in the confusion of the flight and pursuit. The detachment whom we left scaling the face of the rock had struck into the main road, which they pursued at a hearty pace towards the town until they reached the brow of the hill, when they descried two men pushing along with unusual speed.

"There they go, for a hundred," exclaimed one of them, and they immediately gave chase. The fugitives were old Jem and Harry Roughton. The quick ear of the former was the first to catch the sound of rapid footsteps in their rear.

"Run for your life, or we're done," said he; "I'd better

have kept my boots, clumsy as they were for a race, for I'm footsore enough now ; but take care of yourself and never heed me, I know my tack."

Scarcely had he uttered the words before two of the three men were nearly up with them. Harry bounded along the main road like a hunted hare, the officer close upon his heels. Jem cleared the fence with the alacrity of a youth, made off for an adjacent dingle, pursued by the second officer, who, as he groped his way through, received a blow on the back of the neck, and, with a piercing cry for help, fell headlong among the brambles ; whilst Jem, rushing over him, leapt the next fence, and doubling to the left, threw himself into a deep ditch, availing himself of the covering of the rank grass and reeds with which it abounded. The third officer, hearing the cry of his comrade, flew to his assistance, leaving Harry's pursuer to catch his game as best he could. The novelty of Harry's situation, the disgrace attendant on exposure if caught, the apprehension of consequences, vaguely appreciated and magnified by alarm, combined with the thought of his poor wife—for we must do him the justice to say, that she had hardly been out of his mind during the whole of this eventful evening—all these fears and emotions added wings to his speed. He kept well in advance of his pursuer, until he saw some one approaching in the opposite direction ; for the moment, he was about to give in, when the sudden idea struck him that he might baffle both and shorten his route at the same time, by taking to the fields. With his eye fixed upon the few glimmering lights in the town, he leapt the fence and dashed across the meadow. He heard the hard breathing of his enemy close upon his heels again, and redoubled his exertions, with such effect that in a few seconds he found himself on the brink of the dark, deep stream. In his haste he had not calculated

on this obstruction, and again his heart failed him. He turned to face the enemy, doubting whether to fight or surrender, when up came the officer with extended hand. "Now or never," said Harry to himself, and with the suddenness of thought he wheeled round, dashed into the river, and struck off with the desperation of a man swimming for his life. Fortunately, the officer could not swim,—he had but one resource left. Baulked in his purpose, he hastily drew his pistol from his belt, the report resounded through the air, the ball plashed harmlessly in the water, and the momentary light showed a glimpse of the receding swimmer as he nervously combated the stream. "I know you, I know you," cried the officer, "and I'll have you yet." Harry's heart throbbed violently; he felt as if all were over. In unutterable anguish he ceased to struggle, preferring death to disgrace; again the voice rang in his ears—"I know you, Master Smith." Harry breathed again. The conviction that the officer was mistaken as to his identity imparted new vigour to his exertions, and half a dozen powerful efforts brought him panting to the opposite bank, from whence he found his way, half dead with excitement and fatigue, through a back alley to the solitary streets of the town, by which he at length reached his own house without encountering a soul.

CHAPTER IX.

' When heavy sleep has clos'd the sight,
And sickly fancy labours in the night,
We seem to run, and destitute of force
Our sinking limbs forsake us in our course."

DRYDEN.

" But few dare show their thoughts of worst or best ;
Dissimulation always sets apart
A corner for herself ; and therefore fiction
Is that which passes with least contradiction."

BYRON.

FIVE hours had rolled on since Harry closed his weary eyelids, during which agitated and uneasy slumber a thousand horrible visions had flitted across his excited brain. The terrors of a heated imagination had depicted, with fearful intensity, the dangers and hair-breadth escapes of the preceding night. Sometimes pursued by demons across dreary wastes and morasses, he floundered in the yielding mire of the treacherous bog and marsh, sinking deeper and deeper with every struggle to extricate his toil-worn limbs. He felt the hot breath of his demoniacal pursuers playing round his heated temples ; he saw their clenched hands ready to seize him by the hair, which stood on end with horrible affright. Suddenly lifted, as it were, from a yawning abyss, he again felt himself impelled forward at terrific speed, when fresh dangers appeared to encompass him ; every bush and brier in his path seemed alive with enemies, the rattle of musketry sounded in his ears, and bullets, like messengers of death, whistled round

his devoted head ; still he found himself unscathed, but standing for a moment on a precipice, beneath which rolled a dark and unfathomable "hell of waters;" and behind him ministers of vengeance, at whose approach he staggered, fell, and was precipitated headlong into the black, cold waves, which hissed and yelled in his bewildered ears, and overwhelmed him with an aqueous shroud. The bitterness of death, though fraught with horrors inconceivable, seemed in mercy to deprive him of soul and sense ; and falling with intense velocity through dark and endless space, he suddenly awoke again, with the vague idea that the passing bell for his departed soul was booming in his ears.

The cheerful chimes of St. Mary's bells, announcing the hour of prayer, had disturbed his slumber, and dispelled the horrid phantasm which his wild imagination had conjured up. His eye fell upon the countenance of his meek and lovely wife. Though saddened with anxiety, and pale with grief, it was to him a vision of angelic sweetness after the horrors of that troubled dream. He gazed, but could scarcely speak ; his burning face and bright but eager restless eye, his parched tongue and clammy lips told too plainly of the fever that raged within. Harry was ill, but durst not seek the aid of his accustomed medical attendant. His mind was in a state of intense alarm and apprehension, but of what he could scarcely tell. His quick ear nervously caught every little sound ; he started at the very rustle of the curtains, as Jane leant forward to gaze upon his anxious face. The music of the Sabbath bells seemed to him a mockery. Though burning from head to foot, he shivered like an aspen leaf, and cried for water to slake his devouring thirst. Fortunately, Jane was not altogether a stranger to the little medical skill of which her husband's laboratory could

boast, and, by her care and assiduity, Harry became at length more calm and collected.

When he endeavoured to bring together his scattered thoughts, to nerve himself for the task of confessing to Jane the details of the preceding night's adventure, and the apprehensions which still haunted him, his heart almost failed him, but dire necessity has no choice; he could not persuade himself that he had escaped unknown. He felt no confidence in his reckless associates of the past night; he knew not what had become of Pitt, Golightly, Swivel-eye, or Jem; he could not believe, after the narrow escape which he himself owed to the activity of youth, that Jem, comparatively old, and footsore besides, could have evaded the grip of his resolute pursuers.

He pictured to himself first one and then another of these worthies manacled and imprisoned; and, despite the adage of "honour among thieves," he felt that his security against exposure and ruin, rested on a feeble thread, should it become the interest of these unscrupulous partisans in crime to secure their own immunity at the price of treachery towards him. They might, however, yet be free, unidentified and secure from detection. Harry's safety might therefore still depend on secrecy, and that secrecy perhaps purchasable only by deception;—he had now to teach his wife to lie. "Horror of horrors!" How surely one false step leads on to others!

Little do we dream, when tempted from the path of rectitude, how subtle and complicated may be the web of wickedness we are destined to weave; of what crime and falsehood the warp and woof of that destiny may have to be composed, and how much misery and bitterness we may have to endure, in wading through the artificial paths of existence in which we may be doomed to walk. Fear of detection at every turn, ay, at every word we utter,

haunts us like a demon; one lie must be bolstered by another; and that valuable acquisition—human ingenuity—designed for the best of purposes, must ever and anon be perverted, to sustain a fabric of hypocrisy and deceit; whilst the faculty of memory is kept upon the stretch, to preserve a non-betraying consistency in vice, and serve the unhallowed purposes of crime and its concealment.

These, and a hundred other reflections, natural to a mind till then comparatively pure, chased each other through Harry's feverish brain. Still, fear predominated, the first evil step had been taken; and its consequences hung like a dark pall over his spirit; it was too late to retract. The game must be played out, and Harry applied himself to the distasteful task. Having imparted to his confiding wife as much as he deemed prudent, gilding his communications with exaggerated pictures of pecuniary advantage to himself, his wife and children, vindicating evil that fancied good might come of it—his conscience all the while accusing and condemning him—he promised that, when these golden hopes were realized, he would relinquish for ever the fascinating pursuit.

The neophyte in smuggling still clung to hope for the future, whilst smarting under the evils of the present. His promises of reformation were clogged with chimerical conditions. So it was, and ever will be, with the misguided and obdurate devotees of unhallowed speculations. Such was the spirit that lured Harry's daring but ill-fated prototype, Will Watch, to risk his life on the hazard of a die, when he, for the last time, "took helm, and to sea boldly steer'd out again.

"Will had promised his Sue that this trip, if well ended,
Should coil up his hopes, and he'd anchor on shore;
When his pockets were lin'd, why, his life should be mended;
The laws he had broken he'd never break more."

Though Harry Roughton had no reason to fear that "a bullet next minute" might end his career, he could not ignore the conviction of impending ruin, which, in case of detection, must overwhelm him and all that were dear to him; whilst success promised to pave his way with gold. From these hallucinations, with the astuteness of perverted genius impelled by alternations of hope and fear, he drew forth specious arguments to delude his wife, and to secure, by working on her feelings, her co-operation in the concealment of his crime, and the furtherance of his nefarious designs.

Jane's heart palpitated with contending emotions; her better judgment recoiled with sincere abhorrence from the contemplation of ill-gotten gain, and the sacrifice of that inward peace by which it must inevitably be attended. But, when Harry dwelt upon the dangers of exposure, the consequences to himself and his family, the horrors of incarceration in a felon's cell, the disgrace which must surround them, the miseries of poverty, and the privations she and her children must endure, Jane's heart sank within her. She could have endured honest poverty — could have borne any trial or affliction which would not compromise her virtue or integrity, and would have shone the brighter midst the darkness that surrounded her; but, when she contemplated the bare possibility of seeing her husband consigned to the indefinable horrors of a common jail—stone walls, beds of straw, barred windows, bread and water, gloom and darkness, pining sickness and hopeless misery—visions of all these floated through her brain, and left her a prey to wretchedness and despair.

"Tell me, Henry; Oh! tell me, what must I do? I will do and dare anything for you and those darling little ones."

Nay, she almost persuaded herself that the end would

justify the means, however tortuous and even criminal the means to attain that end.

Harry drew her towards him, imprinted a kiss upon her forehead, and burst into tears. Though she still passionately loved him, though her devotion was as warm as ever, she received his caress with a feeling of repugnance she had never known before; and, though *he* wept, her pallid cheek was tearless, and her countenance assumed an air of resolute firmness until then a stranger to her gentle nature.

"Tell me, Harry," she repeated in a sepulchral whisper; "tell me what I am to do; I am nerved for any sacrifice that I can make for—for those—for you and those little—ones."

The last words died upon her lips, but she remained firm. Roughton regained his composure, and proceeded to impress upon his wife the deep importance of rigid secrecy as to his movements, particularly those of the past night.

"Not a soul must know for the world that I was out last night; if anybody inquires about me, don't breathe a syllable; tell them I have a cold; know nothing till I am down to answer for myself."

"Well, if that's all, Henry, I can do that; do not be uneasy."

Easier said than done perhaps. Poor unsophisticated Jane!

"But," said Harry,—and at this moment Mr. Jameson was announced.

"Oh!" said Jane, "I dare say our good rector, missing us at church this morning, has called to inquire after us;" and turning to the servant, she said, "Tell him I am coming directly."

Harry would have checked the message, but reflecting that to deny the good rector, for the first time, would excite

suspicion, he sighed, "Go, Jane; be careful;" and she left the room.

"Well! my good Mrs. Roughton, how do ye do? And how's the good husband? I missed him from his accustomed seat this morning, and could not rest without coming down to inquire after him. He's one of my best and most exemplary parishioners, you know."

"Yes," replied Jane, half mechanically, "he has taken a bad cold, and required a little nursing, and I did not like to leave him."

"Ah! well, that's like a good wife; I know you would neither of you neglect your religious duties without good cause."

Jane's heart smote against her side, and the good man rattled on in his cheerful way—

"I thought it was a cold, perhaps; for Dr. Jones, whilst standing in the gateway of a patient in Gaultree Lane, last night, saw Mr. Roughton hurrying past with some stranger."

Jane gave an involuntary start.

"I inquired of him, you know, because he is your doctor; I was sure he would know if there were anything serious the matter."

"But," timidly interrupted Jane, "don't you think the doctor was mistaken?"

"Now that's like you, Mrs. Roughton; I love that true charity that will not let the left hand know what the right hand doeth. I suspected Mr. Roughton was on one of his little errands of mercy; I know he sometimes benevolently extends the benefit of his medical knowledge to the poor who cannot afford a doctor. Well! a blessing will come on those dear little children for all this. I have confidence in that good Providence which rewards his creatures according to their deserts; though his illness, as

a consequence, may seem to our finite minds to point to a different conclusion."

Oh! the gall and wormwood to poor Jane of these benevolent suggestions; she could make no reply, but drew her trembling fingers through the curls which clustered round little Kate's innocent face, and tried to smile, but sighed.

"You're not well, Mrs. Roughton, cheer up; shall I see your good man? a little cheerful conversation may do him good."

"I think," but her voice faltered, for she scarcely knew what to say; then, making another attempt, she hesitatingly continued—"I think he is asleep, it would be a pity to disturb him."

The conversation turned upon other topics; Jane grew more at ease. At length the good pastor rose, and drawing on his gloves, said—"Give my kind regards and my blessing to the sick man, and tell him I hope soon to see him well again."

It was the rector's good-humoured habit to stand and chat at parting, whilst he buttoned up his long coat and smoothed his white cravat, and Jane felt that she must say something—"Mr. Roughton desired I would give his kind respects to you."

"Well, now," said the rector, laughing, "how could he if he were asleep?"

Jane blushed, and stammered out—"Oh! he was not asleep when I left him, but he seemed going off. It was before he fell asleep, he thought perhaps you might call;" and she blushed again. To conceal her confusion, she abruptly said—"I'll go and see." She ran up stairs, and returned to confirm the falsehood, for Harry dared not venture to see him till he had heard her story, lest his should not accord. He declined to see him, and affected to shut his eyes. She

told the rector her Harry's eyes were closed, and she could not wake him !

Shaking her heartily by the hand, and repeating his adieux as he closed the door after him, the unsuspecting rector left poor Jane the self-convicted victim of falsehood.

She returned to Harry's room, and there he was, wide awake, waiting with feverish anxiety her return. His wakeful gaze seemed to reproach her for her first lie ; but she smothered the emotion, and related to him the substance of the interview. At the mention of Dr. Jones' communication, his brow grew dark, and he muttered—" I hate that man !"

Jane meekly observed—" You were not used to hate any body, Harry, and Dr. Jones was always a favourite with you till now."

What strange hues our best instincts assume from the false colouring of a perverted imagination ! Jane gently touched upon the deception she had been obliged to practise, and Harry, who had ever been a model of sincerity and truth, with an affectionate pressure of her hand, replied—" You have done well." That pressure was not returned ; those words smote her to the heart ; she withdrew her hand from his, burst into an agony of tears, fell upon her knees, and prayed.

CHAPTER X.

"He has profaned the sacred name of friend,
And worn it into vileness.
See how he sets his countenance for deceit,
And promises a lie before he speaks."—DRYDEN.

THE daylight hours of Sunday wore away; a little sleep, judicious refreshment, and Jane's good nursing, had considerably restored Roughton's shattered nerves. The approach of twilight, the hour when birds of ill omen and beasts of prey begin to rouse themselves for their nocturnal wanderings, had just been succeeded by the dark canopy of night, when a gentle rap was heard at the front door. The servant girl and the apprentice were gone to church, and, as Jane rose to open the door, Harry eagerly exclaimed—"I'll see nobody; say I'm asleep, say I'm ill, say anything to send 'em off."

Jane descended, and, to her horror, on opening the door Pitt stealthily but resolutely pushed himself in, and closed it. "Mr. Roughton's ill," observed Jane, "and can see nobody."

"Ill or not ill," he brutally replied, "*I must see him.*"

"But," said Jane, and the thought of her former lie half choked her, "but he is asleep."

"Then wake him," replied the unabashed villain, "for I must and will see him;" and so saying, he marched across the shop, entered the little sitting-room, and threw himself into a chair.

"This is very strange behaviour," timidly said Jane; "my husband told me he could see no one."

"He must and shall see me; so I'll have none of your gammon, nor his either. Mark my words, it's better for him, and you too; so go and wake him up directly, and say I'm here. I watched your folks off to church, and I'm not going to wait till they come back."

Jane felt some indefinable reason that they were in the power of this coarse and impudent scoundrel; and, noting the difference between his present imperious rudeness and the oily smoothness of his tone and manner on the preceding evening, she ascended, with wounded feelings and a beating heart, the staircase that led to Roughton's room. Half afraid to say that she had admitted anyone in the face of his injunctions, she faintly whispered—"Here's Mr. Pitt; he would come in."

"Bring him up stairs directly," said Harry, in an excited tone.

Jane gazed in silence for a moment, and revolved in her mind the strange incongruity of his refusal to receive their much-respected minister, and the alacrity with which he hailed the approach of the detestable Mr. Pitt. Whilst these thoughts were passing through her mind, Harry ejaculated—"Show him up directly, Jane, and leave us alone."

Pondering on the new-born sternness of his nature, and this second denial of his accustomed confidence, she obeyed, and having ushered in Mr. Pitt, returned to the solitary sitting-room, to brood over the miseries which overwhelmed her.

"Well, Harry! how goes it?" said Pitt.

Mr. Roughton winced at this familiarity, and replied with offended dignity—"Mr. Pitt, I am far from well, or you would not see me here, Sir."

"Don't *Mister* and *Sir* me," said Pitt; "we're all in the same boat, and must row together without wasting time in ceremonies. How did you get off last night?"

"I don't mean to run such a risk again," said Harry, in a querulous tone.

"Gammon!" replied Pitt, "it's nothing when you're used to it. Did you see anybody that knew you?"

"No! but somebody, I find, saw me, and knew me, and I suspect, you too, for we were together."

"Ah!" eagerly exclaimed Pitt, "and who was that?"

"Dr. Jones."

"Oh! the sneaking rascal; if he peaches I'll have his weasand-pipe pinched for him."

Harry, hardly unscrupulous enough yet to acquiesce in so horrible a suggestion, whether meant in earnest or not, explained, notwithstanding his own suddenly-conceived aversion to the doctor—"Oh! he only saw you and me passing through Gaultree Lane, and fancied I was poaching on his patients."

"Well, let him think so, and I'll give it out that you went to see my wife, who wouldn't see anybody else, that'll account for both of us, and she's a regular brick *now*, and I'll warrant she'll stick to it. Your little missis will get better manners yet when she's up to a dodge or two."

A feeling of anguish stole through Harry's mind; he had loved that woman for her charming simplicity and purity of heart; her virtues had been his pride. His face grew crimson, but he stifled his emotion.

"Well, so much for the doctor; and what next?" said Pitt.

"Why, as for myself, I took to my heels, and, having jumped into the river, swam across it; the cowardly coast-guard behind, afraid of the water, shouted out, at the top

of his voice—"I know you, Mr. Smith, and I'll have you yet!"

Here Pitt burst out into a vulgar triumphant laugh. "All right," said he, "its all english'd now; you are some'at like Jack Smith the tinker, he's one of us." Harry did not relish the similitude. Pitt went on—"He's in custody; and he'll be brought up to-morrow with old Brookes' two chaps."

Harry trembled. "Do you think they'll split," said he anxiously.

"Oh, no! thanks to your £50 and that headstrong lieutenant, for he has'nt got the stuff; the bales were safely housed in the cabs a good ten minutes before they came up to old Brookes', and, while they were bothering there, the 'bacco was miles off and stowed away snugly. Old Jem doubled his man up like a trump and hid himself in a ditch, till t'other fellow hauled off his companion, and he got off none the worse for the job, barring a few scratches on his trotters, and the loss of his boots. I have heard the whole story from Golightly and Swiveleye;—that lad's worth his weight in gold."

"But," inquired Harry with increasing interest, "how did you and Swiveleye manage it?"

"Why that's soon told," replied Pitt. "I fell in with him and Jack, who shrewdly hinted that the nearer we stuck to the scene of danger, the less likely would they be to suspect our whereabouts; so we made for a barn within a stone's throw of old Brookes' homestead, passed the night there in a comfortable heap of straw, and slunk home by different routes before day-break. So now, Harry, keep your own counsel and all's right; I'm off to retain Isaac Sharpe to defend our three fellows to-morrow; so good night. Be sure to be up and about in the morning as usual, and no flinching, mind, but put a good face on't as if

nothing had happened. If any questions are asked, don't forget that my wife was bad on Saturday night, and would'nt have any other doctor than you."

With this advice he closed the door after him, blundered his way down stairs and strode out of the house, with a familiar wink at Mrs. Roughton as he crossed the room.

"That's a disagreeable fellow," said Harry as his wife entered the room. Her eye brightened with satisfaction; but Roughton added—"He's a deep hand and a clever fellow, and we mustn't quarrel with him." Her countenance fell once more; the faint hope that Harry might cast him off died away, and she felt more keenly the conviction that they were in his power.

"If anybody asks about Saturday night keep up the story of my being out to visit the sick. Mrs. Pitt's the patient, and he swears his wife will stick to it like a Briton, and so we shall bamboozle the doctor, and perhaps keep him at a distance too. I like the fellow better now; but the better at a distance, mind."

Jane hinted that it was a pity to cast off a friend who sent so many prescriptions to their laboratory.

"Never mind that," cried Harry, with a snap of his fingers; "we shall get more by last night's patient than a thousand of his prescriptions."

Jane only thought of the sacrifice made to procure such a success, and how much sweeter would be the fruits of her husband's legitimate calling, than the luxury of woe, and sank into a reverie, whilst Harry turned on his pillow and slept.

CHAPTER XI.

"There's but the twinkling of a star
Between a man of peace and war;
A thief and justice; fool and knave;
A crafty lawyer and pickpocket;
A great philosopher and blockhead."—HUDIBRAS.

As the village clock struck eleven, Thomas Salt, Esq., or, as he was more generally yclept, old Squire Salt, and indeed, sometimes, with greater familiarity, Salt Tom, rode up to the "Ship and Anchor," and was shown, with all the courtesy of which the landlord was capable, into the club-room, usually denominated on such occasions the justice-room, where he was presently joined by a little fussy looking man, attired in a suit of black and a white neckerchief, but no shirt collar. His short square-cut black whiskers, and hard but ruddy features, surmounted by a sleek bald head, gave to his general appearance a character clerical rather than legal; nevertheless he was the justice's clerk, nor could a greater contrast be well conceived, than that which the portly justice presented in his green riding-coat, buckskin breeches, and top boots, in which he aped the country gentleman, though his grotesque and plebeian countenance, deep sunk and cunning eyes, coupled with some floating surmises that his broad acres had been accumulated by rather exorbitant profits on excisable articles, favoured the suspicion that his origin was more obscure than present circumstances would seem

to warrant. Whilst the little man in black was busily assorting diverse bundles of papers neatly tied with red tape, and adjusting a few books bound in smooth calf, upon the table, the justice occupied himself in a running conversation with the burly lieutenant, who had just made his appearance to prefer his charge against John alias Jack Smith, Thomas alias Tom Broadface, and Charles alias Charley Wakeful, for smuggling.

"Two separate informations, if you please—one against Smith, and the other against Broadface and Wakeful," said the lieutenant.

"Speak to the clerk about that," replied the justice; and, whilst these preliminaries were going on, Isaac Sharpe accompanied by a well-dressed lad of sixteen, as his clerk, had claimed the right of a private interview with the prisoners. Smith's defence was soon arranged, an alibi conclusive. The case of the two farm-servants presented very little difficulty, but for the partial confession of Tom Broadface, and the tell-tale cash found in his pocket. The lawyer's clerk gave a knowing wink at Charley, as he seated himself at the table by his master; and after a brief consultation, carried on chiefly between the clerk and Charley, their plans were all arranged, and on the announcement that the court was waiting, the prisoners were marshalled into the room by the coast-guard, followed by Isaac Sharpe and his hopeful clerk.

Salt Tom took his seat with becoming dignity. The lieutenant opened his case by a graphic description of the events of the preceding night; the capture of the two men by himself, and the detention of Smith by one of his officers.

"But what is it all about—what do you charge them with?" roared the justice.

"Smuggling, Sir," replied the lieutenant.

"Smuggling what?" asked the justice.

"Tobacco, I believe; but we shall come to that presently."

"Tobacco, Sir! but where is the tobacco?"

"Oh, that they got clear off with."

"Well, but what evidence have you of any smuggling at all?" asked the justice.

"Only think of the cart and horses; the condition in which the latter were found; the £5 in that waggoner's pocket," pointing to Tom, "and his confession; the running away of Smith; his identification and detention; to say nothing of the seduction from his post of my best officer!"

"Well, the unwarrantable liberty taken with the horse and cart may constitute a charge against somebody, at the suit of Mr. Brookes, but I do not see how that makes out a case of smuggling; but you may proceed if you think you have any case: which will you take first?"

"The case against John Smith," replied the lieutenant.

Here Mr. Isaac Sharpe interposed—"I believe, your worship, the offence charged against my client, Smith, was alleged by the lieutenant, in his opening speech, to have been committed between sunset on Saturday evening and sunrise on Sunday morning. Now, Sir, I think I can spare him and you some trouble, and save some time to the court, by accounting at once for the absence of my client from the scene of action during all those hours."

The lieutenant, hoping to get something out of the defendant's witness, consented, and Mr. Sharpe called the landlord of the "Blue Boar;" who deposed that Smith dined with a few friends at his house on Saturday night, that they sat drinking there until half past twelve, when the others left, and Smith fell asleep on a bench, where he lay till seven the next morning, and, after drinking a bottle of soda water and brandy, went home about eight o'clock to breakfast.

"Your man was clearly mistaken," said the justice, "and it's well you did not swear him to Smith's identity, or he might have run the risk of an indictment for perjury; that case must be dismissed. The next case."

The lieutenant preferred a general charge against Thomas Broadface and Charles Wakeful, for being concerned in carrying and conveying sixty bales of tobacco from Saltholme cliffs to the turnpike road, and then and there delivering them to some person or persons unknown.

"What have you to say in answer to the charge?" asked the justice.

Wakeful maintained a dogged silence; but the circumstantiality of the charge, the number of bales accidentally hit upon, and his own conscience, frightened Tom into the belief that all was known; and hoping to find favour by submission, he blurted out—"Please your worship, I shouldna' had nothin' to do wi' it, if I had'nt bin deceived about what we was goin' to do by a young fellow."

Here Sharpe's clerk turned his keen eyes suddenly upon him, and transfixed him with the gaze of a basilisk; Tom's tongue faltered, whilst Wakeful, drawing close to his ear, whispered between his teeth—"If you name a soul I'll kill you."

"Who was that young fellow?" impatiently asked the lieutenant.

Here Sharpe interposed—"Don't answer that question," and, turning to the justice, said—"I submit, Sir, that, as the defendant is not the complainant's witness, he may call his own, but not put questions to my client."

An altercation ensued between Sharpe and the lieutenant; the justice's clerk and several other parties interfered, and the justice's voice intermingled with the rest.

During this confusion, Wakeful impressed on Tom that, as he had done for himself, he needn't draw anybody else

in; "but," said he, "stand dumb, know nothing, and they can't hurt me; but if you peach I'll do for you."

Order was restored; Tom pleaded guilty to he hardly knew what. Wakeful sullenly growled—"Not guilty." The lieutenant, delighted to have hit one bird, as he called it, was satisfied with his triumph. He resolved to squeeze poor Tom when he got him into gaol, and withdrew the charge against his companion.

The justice felt that he had no alternative, but to commit Broadface. Old Brookes roared out—"Why, yer worship has committed the honestest man o' the two, and let the rogue go free."

"Silence," cried the clerk.

"Do you appear here to give a character to your man, Mr. Brookes?" asked the justice.

"Well," replied the hearty old farmer, "I didna come for that, but I'll do it tho'. He's lived wi' me five years come Michaelmas next, I never lost the vally of a turkey or a goose, no, not of a' egg, till arter t'other chap come, some six months ago."

Here the justice interposed—"We've nothing to do with Wakeful, he's acquitted."

"More's the pity," cried old Brookes; "leastways more's the pity he's got off, and Tom's got in fer't, for he's at the bottom on't I'll warrant."

A roar of laughter followed this energetic appeal of the old farmer.

"Well! well! from all you know of him he's an honest man, is he," said the justice, "this little smuggling affair excepted?"

"Ay, ay; as honest for that matter as yer worship, by'r leddy," retorted Brookes; and a momentary twinge distorted the features of Salt Tom, whilst the court was convulsed with laughter.

The justice smote the table with his fist, and in stentorian voice cried—"Order, order!" Then addressing the prisoners, he said—"Charles Wakeful, you've had a narrow escape, I caution you not to come before me again; and you, Thomas Broadface, convicted on your own confession, have incurred a penalty of £100, but, in consideration of the good character you have had,"—here a titter ran through the court, at which the justice scowled, but proceeded,—"I shall mitigate that penalty to £25. In default of payment it will be my duty to commit you to prison."

"Never mind," muttered Sharpe, "we'll soon have that out of somebody," and he gave an evil glance at the lieutenant, which bespoke as plainly as if he had uttered the words, an action for false imprisonment at the suit of the acquitted Wakeful.

Overjoyed with his prize, this significant threat was lost on the lieutenant; who, calculating upon getting all the particulars out of his pliant and conscience-stricken prisoner, demanded the warrant of commitment.

Sharpe exchanged a few words with his apt clerk, then patiently waited till the lieutenant had obtained the last document and paid the fees, whereupon he arose and said—"You'll please to keep hands off that man, I'm instructed by my client to pay down that little fine;" and, throwing down the five and twenty pounds before the justice's clerk, he called out, with a significant leer at the lieutenant—"Tom, lad, you're at liberty."

Old Brookes was as astonished as his man, and, after staring at the lawyer with open mouth for a full minute, he exclaimed—"Well, this beats hoss-racing, cock-fi'tin', and judges comin' down to 'ang folks at 'sizes! you're a trump, Maister Sharpe, and thee sha't come and dine wi' me to-day or my name aint Brookes. Tom, come along lad,

I forgie thee; but as to thee, Wakeful, thee may'st fetch thy traps away from my place, and the sooner the better, for I mistrust thee greatly."

Master and man, accompanied by their new acquaintance, the lawyer, marched off together to the farmer's house; but the hopeful lawyer's clerk remained to cultivate the acquaintance of Charley Wakeful.

So suddenly restored to his master's favour, Tom was full of gratitude, and thought it his duty to make a clean breast of it at once.

This confidence the lawyer evidently desired to check, doubting the farmer for the very reason that an honest man would have trusted him. Sharpe's tact, therefore, was to urge the expediency of silence:—"Hedges have ears, let well alone, and thank your stars that you're not grinning through the bars; only drop a few words in the ear of the coast-guard, or of any spy who may do it for you, and I wouldn't give much for your chance."

"There's a good deal in that," said the farmer, "so hold thy tongue Tom, or worse may come on it; but let my hosses alone in futur'."

At these words poor Tom's spirit rose again, and, emphatically throwing his slouched hat on the ground, he exclaimed—"Well, I should like my will at that young scapegrace as draw'd me into this job."

"Why, you stupid fellow," replied the lawyer, "he's the best friend you have in the world, or you wouldn't be here now. He was duped as much as you; do you want better proof of his contrition than the sacrifice he's made to get you out of trouble? five and twenty pounds is no joke to a lad like that, and yet how cheerfully he forked it out! if amends like that isn't proof enough of a good heart, I don't know what is."

Tom scratched his knotty curls with a puzzled look, and at length gasped out—"And did *he* find the tin?"

The lawyer nodded affirmatively, and Tom exclaimed—"Then I've done, so say no more about it."

"The less the better," said the lawyer, "or you may get that poor fellow into the same hobble that he's just got you out of, and I reckon you'd hardly do as much for him."

"By no manner of means," replied Tom, "'cause I could'nt, and there's an end on't; so I'm mum."

"Amen," said old Brookes; and with these assurances of their secrecy and discretion, the lawyer took his leave, and hurried home to report the result of his day's work to Mr. Pitt.

As night closed in, Charley sulkily fetched away his scanty wardrobe from his late master's house, and made a brief visit to the cart hovel, to filch from between the rafters and the thatch a little canvas bag, containing a similar sum to that which the unsophisticated Tom had stowed in his pocket on the night of the run. And thus, with purse replenished and bundle in hand, Charley rejoined his friend Jack at the turn of the road, and the reckless pair trudged off to the "Blue Boar," to make a night of it, and lay their plans for future operations.

The next morning as Harry entered his shop he encountered Jack, rigged out like a tar, as unlike the lawyer's clerk as chalk is unlike cheese; putting his finger on his lips, Jack slipped a note into the hand of Mr. Roughton, and departed without a word.

The missive ran thus:—"All right—No birds jugged—Jaws sewed up—Vegetables well sold—Swag P.M.—New patient better—Flames."*

* To the reader unacquainted with such jargon, the following exposition may not be unacceptable:—"Everything goes safely—None of our party committed

The hand-writing of this elegant composition was unrecognizable, but Harry required no signature to satisfy him whence it came; though a stranger to the farce of the Gaultree Lane patient might have been puzzled to make out the author, or turn the epistle to account, had it fallen into other hands than those for whom it was designed.

to prison—The secrecy of the detected accomplices has been purchased—The tobacco has been sold to advantage—The cash will be paid this afternoon—The farce of my wife's illness has served its purpose (this allusion is the key to the authorship of this note)—Burn it when read."

CHAPTER XII.

"Then fear not if 'tis needful to produce
Some term unknown, or obsolete in use,
As PITT has furnished us a word or two
Which lexicographers declined to do." BYRON.

MONDAY had worn away with no fresh incident to disturb Roughton's composure; and Tuesday morning, as we have already seen, found him behind his counter, as if nothing unusual had happened.

Though slightly pale, and wearing a somewhat anxious look, an ordinary observer would not have suspected that any hidden canker-worm lay concealed beneath the cheerful and smiling exterior that Harry assumed. It is true that the sudden appearance of the sailor-boy, with his mysterious missive, at the moment disconcerted him; for, until he had satisfied himself of the reassuring facts it was destined to convey, his morbid imagination, a prey to fear, only suggested the announcement of some new catastrophe, or some fresh sorrow to be endured.

"*No birds jugged—Jaws sewed up*"—said he to himself, for as yet he was little familiar with the slang phraseology of his new craft; but, as his own fears pointed to the danger of treachery, in the event of any of his indigent companions being incarcerated and at the mercy of those who might extort an impeachment as the price of liberty, he concluded that the three prisoners of the preceding day had baffled the skill of their prosecutors, and had been

bought over to silence by the wiles and the gold of Mr. Pitt. The rest was plain—the narcotic weed had found a customer, and the pelf was almost within his greedy grasp. He stuck the note in his waistcoat pocket with an air of triumph, and, from time to time, when he thought himself unobserved by his harmless apprentice, drew it out again, to satisfy himself that he had read aright. Honest Sandys pursued his vocation of compounding pills and boluses, making up draughts and superintending decoctions and infusions, without a thought of what was passing in his master's mind, for he venerated his master as a model of integrity and human kindness. But "conscience makes cowards of us all," and Harry's perverted imagination conjured up suspicions of espionage and treachery in every eye that turned upon him, and in everybody who approached him. Even the presence of his artless and faithful apprentice was irksome to him, yet he knew not why. He felt the full misery of this artificial state of existence, and the more he dwelt upon it the more did he become an adept at dissimulation and imposture. Under the pretence of consulting the pharmacopœia he stuck the fascinating note between the leaves, and perused it again and again, ever and anon glancing uneasily at Sandys, as if the poor lad read, and comprehended with himself the full meaning of the magic words. "Swag," said he to himself, thinking aloud; and then, starting at his own voice, he crimsoned at his folly, hastily shut the book, and gave a spasmodic cough.

"Did you speak to me, Sir?" asked Sandys.

"No—Yes," replied Harry; "well, never mind, go on with what you are doing."

Sandys raised his eyes from a rather cramply written prescription, the latinity of which puzzled him, and said—"Mr. Roughton, will you please to let me look at that book, Sir?"

Harry paled, and replied testily—"No ; mind your own business."

" But, Sir—"

" Dont *but* me."

The lad stared in amazement; Harry mistook it for a look of cool insolence, and was about to reply, when his better judgment prevailed. He felt, in spite of himself, that he was unjust, though he could not control his internal misgivings, and affected to laugh, as if it were all a joke. Assuming the most insinuating air, he began to coax his apprentice in an obsequious and patronizing manner, as much opposed to his natural disposition as the vindictiveness of his recent demeanour, and slipping the note out of the book into his waistcoat pocket again, he said—"Here, my lad, take the book."

Once more he withdrew the note, and, fixing his eye on the word "flames," he precipitately left the shop, and threw it into the sitting-room fire. The dirty scrap, coiled and twisted by the flame, rolled back on a smoking coal. singed and glittering with two or three small sparks that shone like diamonds on the half-ignited corner—but they glared on him like the eyes of a spectre. He seized the poker to thrust the ragged morsel in the flames, when it lightly rose on the current he had disturbed, and jauntily cantered up the chimney. "Damn it!" cried Harry, as he threw down the poker.

"What was that, my dear?" said the unobtrusive Jane, whom he had scarcely noticed plying her needle, and occasionally brushing off a tear.

"Only an old prescription," said Harry, blushing at the lie in spite of himself.

"Why should that make you so angry, Harry? I never heard you swear before."

He bit his lip, muttered some foolish excuse, and left

her again to solitude and tears. As he re-entered the shop a young man in the garb of a groom, who had been lounging about the door, advanced towards him, and, with a wicked leer, in which Harry recognized the expression of his ubiquitous and Protean friend Jack, put into his hand a paper, adding with affected simplicity—"Could you please, Sir, to make up that prescription while I wait?"

"Shall I do it, Sir?" inquired the obliging Sandys.

"No; go into the kitchen, and look after those infusions; they'll be wanted soon."

"What does this mean?" asked Harry.

"Gammon!" retorted the young rascal; "Master Pitt says you're to be at the 'Blue Boar' this artemoon, at five o'clock, to settle with old Capt'n Marsloops and the spotsman, and receive your share of the swag."

Harry paused, not half liking that disreputable house. "Can't they do without me? Let Mr. Pitt settle for me, and hand over my share at his convenience."

"Don't trust him," was Jack's significant reply; "*they* never trusses one another."

"Well, I'll come," said Harry, with a groan.

"Be sure you slip in the back way, through Cut-throat Lane, and keep your eyes open when you come out."

Roughton, musing for a moment on this perplexing injunction, cast his eyes upon the ground, and, ere he raised them, Jack had disappeared.

Gloomily the day rolled on; customers came and went; the struggle to maintain his composure was almost unendurable. Five o'clock approached; Harry stepped into the sitting-room, put on his greatcoat, and took up his heaviest walking-stick.

"Where now, Harry?" said his wife.

"I want a few drugs, and must go up to old Flannagan's;" and, as he passed through the shop, Sandys, with

praiseworthy anxiety after his master's interest, said—"Please, Sir, you haven't entered that prescription that came in this morning."

With a ready adroitness he replied—"Oh, it's done and paid for, never mind."

As Harry strode away, his conscience smote him, as the many wilful falsehoods he had uttered during the last eight and forty hours recurred to his mind; but, finding how much easier their utterance grew by practice, he smothered his upbraidings in the contemplation of the "swag," and hurried on to the rendezvous.

As he passed by the end of Brook Street, he was accosted by the bluff old sportsman, Jem, who seizing him by the hand with all the familiarity of an equal, hoped he was none the worse for his dousing. Roughton durst not rebel, for Jem knew the secret; and whilst the old fellow still clutched Harry in his vulgar grasp, who should come up but the rector? Harry, covered with confusion, hastily withdrew his hand, saluted the rector, and would have moved on; but the kind-hearted man could not pass a respected parishioner, so recently an invalid, without a friendly word, and, in his usually jocose vein, but with a half-bantering tone, congratulated Mr. Roughton on his new acquaintance.

"Oh," replied Harry, with increasing facility at deception, "he's very drunk, Sir; but he's an old customer of mine, who will take liberties when in liquor, and one don't like to hurt the feelings even of a brute."

"Well said, well said," rejoined the rector; "it's only weak people who are too proud to bend to a fellow-creature, and make allowances for their little failings. Pray, how is Mrs. Roughton? I was just going to call upon her: I thought she did not look well on Sunday. I'm delighted to see you about again—good-bye, good-bye."

The rector *would* give him credit for good, in spite of himself; whilst Harry felt that every hour destroyed his own christian charity, and made him suspect evil in everybody else; but he banished these reflections, and hurried on towards the purlieus of the "Blue Boar," whilst the cheerful rector bent his steps towards Harry's domicile.

Mrs. Roughton summoned her best good-looks as she heard the animated tones of the worthy rector exchanging a few words with honest Sandys as he passed through the shop.

"Well, Mrs. Roughton! good-day to you; I hope you are better than you were on Sunday. I am delighted to find that the good husband is about again."

"Yes," replied Jane, "I'm sorry he's not within now; he's just gone to Mr. Flannagan's, to procure a few drugs that he's short of."

"Mr. Flannagan's!" exclaimed the rector, laughing; "why, I've just met him at the other end of the town, exchanging some civilities with an old customer, whose affectionate familiarity he could not find in his good heart to rebuff; tho' he said the poor fellow was drunk, and, in his good nature, pleaded that as an excuse."

"Deceived again!" inwardly ejaculated Jane; adding aloud, unconscious of the analogy—"Oh yes! he had to call at another place—I forgot;" and conscience again reproached her for the fraudulent evasion.

"Will Mr. Roughton be able to attend our Sunday School committee on Thursday, think you?" inquired the rector. "I shall be sorry if he cannot, he's always so hearty in every good cause; and we have, you know—and I say it without wishing to scandalize anybody—we have here so many outside christians, men of rather questionable private morals, who would sooner retard than promote our philanthropic plans, that I am anxious to have all my

sincere friends around me at that meeting. I suppose," he added, musingly, "it is much the same in our sea-port towns generally."

Jane shrank almost from herself, as these words brought home, with a burning feeling of shame, the reflection that the same veil of hypocrisy, which her heart concurred with the rector in condemning, was rapidly enveloping her husband and herself. She felt as if a resistless fate were hurrying them to perdition; and blushed that, whilst she was bitterly experiencing this painful reality, the good rector was still giving them credit for integrity and sincerity, the semblance of which she was, by refined duplicity, impelled to affect. O! that she could have laid bare that overburdened heart, and have sought consolation from him, whose influence even at that hour might have snatched her Harry as a brand from the burning! But the fear of shame rose like a phantom before her; she could not expose to him whose censure she most dreaded, the disgrace and misery which clung to her husband and herself. Even in that well-nigh broken heart, pride rode rampant over every better thought; she recoiled from the confession, and maintained the mask with smiling face and bleeding heart. Jane resolved that at all events Harry should be spared the palpable hypocrisy of performing the part of the christian on a public stage, whilst denying the character in the actions of his private life, though she herself should play the hypocrite to avert it. Nerving herself for the occasion, she observed—"Mr. Roughton's business is increasing, it takes him more and more from home; I fear I cannot promise for his attendance at the meeting on Thursday next."

"Ah! my good Mrs. Roughton, so it is; the riches of this world, the love of lucre, are the tares that overrun and extirpate the wheat; they will make you none the richer in the next world; but I suppose they have their

charms, and there are few who, like you, are blessed with little ones, that do not discover a duty even in the pursuit of this world's goods. May the little angels plead for you before the mercy-seat; but don't rely—don't rely on it. Good-bye; tell him to be there if he can, and may a blessing come of it: adieu!" and away he went, leaving Jane fresh food for meditation.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Gold! yellow, glittering, precious gold!
Gold, that will make black white; foul, fair; wrong, right;
Base, noble; old, young; coward, valiant!
Ha! ye gods, why this will pluck stout men's pillows
from below their heads."—SHAKESPEARE.

"My destiny has so involved about me
Her spider web, that I can only flutter,
Like the poor fly, but break it not."—BYRON.

WE left Harry, after parting with the rector, on the threshold of Cut-throat Lane. Penetrating into that *cul de sac*, he groped his way along the dark and slimy passage, through haunts of squalid filth and misery, to the narrow doorway, which, by a dirty winding stair, led the way to an obscure back-room. If a coat of paint had ever freshened up the cheerless aspect of that gloomy chamber, it had long ago disappeared with its natural enemies, soap and scrubbing brushes. An old, and once crimson curtain hung in flimsy, faded folds over the dusky quarrel panes of a poor apology for a window; the corners of the room were plentifully decorated with festoons of cobwebs, heavy and grey with dust; whilst successions of similar network were in progress of formation by those ingenious blood-suckers, whose sole occupation is weaving meshes for the unwary, and devouring them in their toils—fitting emblems of those dark specimens of poor humanity whom Harry found in the occupation of that dreary room. A solitary candle, of rush-

light dimensions, just sufficed to render "darkness visible." Seated at a filthy beer-stained table, were three sinister-looking men, in the tallest of whom Roughton at once discovered the estimable Mr. Pitt. The one on his right hand was a spare and hungry-looking man, attired somewhat like a quaker, but whose keen and twinkling eyes peered cunningly into the face of the new comer. The third was a thick-set, round-shouldered fellow of about forty, with weatherbeaten and bronzed features, encircled by a mass of thick knotted hair and large black whiskers. A short round jacket of dark naval-blue and a pair of once white trousers, constituted his external garments, whilst a blue checked shirt, with the lank loose ends of a black neckerchief, appeared to supply the place of waistcoat; and in the belt, which served for braces, glittered the handle of a rude clasp-knife. The portrait of this worthy may not be very attractive, but it is due to him to state that there was a bluff honesty in his countenance, which forbade the supposition that he was a natural-born villain.

"Mr. Roughton—Captain Marsloops—Mr. Mundy," said Mr. Pitt, bowing to one and then to the other, as Harry approached; "and now to business—take a seat Mr. Roughton." The chair stuck to Harry's fingers, as he touched the ditched and greasy back, and the crazy joints creaked as he seated himself.

Harry felt sick and dizzy. "Why do we meet here?" said he to Mr. Pitt, looking gapishly round the room, and then at the dirty table.

"Better here than in a more public place," dryly answered Pitt.

"The gen'lman's rayther squeamish," observed the captain, with a roguish leer at Mr. Mundy, who grinned with ineffable contempt.

"To business," reiterated Mr. Pitt; "now, captain, what's your share of the plunder?"

"Master, you know there was seventy bales, and at a pound a bale you can surely reckon what that comes to."

"A pound a bale!" exclaimed Harry, "that's a heavy freight, isn't it?"

"The young man's rayther green, master, aint he?" said the captain with a contemptuous sneer; "he's got to learn that its quite another thing to do a job over the left, and keep your tongue between your teeth."

Harry began to fear that the coveted harvest he came to gather at so much pain, would be rudely diminished in the winnowing, and could not help exhibiting some impatience.

"Hold your tongue, young man," said Marsloops, "my time's precious; and remember, one word from me would blow you into smithereens in no time; pod down my dobbers, and thank your stars that you've got to deal wi' a straightfor'ard man."

Roughton quailed beneath the threat—Pitt held out his hand towards Mundy, who, without a word, drew out a canvas bag full of gold and notes.

"Yellow boys for me," said the captain, adding in an under tone to Pitt,—“they tell no tales.”

The point of this observation was lost on Harry, and Pitt proceeded to count out seventy sovereigns, which the captain carelessly swept up without re-counting, and lodged them in a leather case; then, drawing back a step or two, he asked—"Any wet on the strength on it?"

"No," said Pitt, "sober to night, lad."

"Then I'll mizzle," replied the sailor.

"Wait a little," said Pitt, "we've something else in the wind."

"I'm your man then," said the captain, as he folded his arms over his brawny chest and reseated himself.

Pitt counted the rest of the cash, and replaced it in the bag.

"Just makes up the £500," said Mundy.

Pitt nodded assent, and Mr. Mundy withdrew.

"But he has no receipt," observed Roughton.

"No black and white for me, young man; it's dangerous," whispered Mundy in a significant tone, as he brushed by Harry's chair and left the room.

Whereupon Jem and Swiveleye entered, and each received twenty pounds, and departed without a word. Golightly came next.

"Well Jack," said Pitt, "you've had fifty you know."

"Yes," returned Jack; "twenty-five for the fool that pleaded guilty, ten to old Sharpe, five for cas'alties, and five pound apiece to the cabbies, and cheap too; so there goes the fifty pound, and what's better still, they know nobody but me; and now my turn if you please." And thereupon Pitt counted him out twenty pounds, which Jack pocketed, and walked off as gay as a lark.

"And now, Mr. Roughton, all's told, and the balance is ours. First of all, there's your fifty pounds that Jack has just given a good account of, and your half of the rest is one hundred and sixty-five pounds. Pitt counted out the sum in bank notes, observing that they would be more convenient carriage to Mr. Roughton, and thrust the balance of hard cash into his own pockets.

Roughton clutched the two hundred and fifteen pounds with an insane delight, though he inwardly thanked God that this ugly business was over, and resolved that, as this was his first, it should also be his last venture in so hazardous and demoralizing a speculation. With this laudable resolution, he rose to retire.

"Hold hard, Harry," said Mr. Pitt, "another word with you; look upon me as a friend, and take what I have to say

in good part. You've had a fair specimen of the sort of men we have to deal with ; dare-devils are necessary evils, arn't they captain?" said Pitt with a cajoling smile.

"Ay, ay, Sir," grunted Marsloops, as he winked knowingly at Pitt.

"Not quite safe, eh! captain, to meet such customers in a dark night after offending 'em?" observed Pitt, and then turning to Roughton, added—"And now Harry, my good fellow, what I want to say is, don't you be uncivil to any of these smart lads, for the smartest fellows are often the most resentful."

Harry felt the force of this homily, and he groaned inwardly, for he still trembled for his reputation ; and, again screwing up his courage to resist all further importunities which might tend to widen the circle of these inconvenient acquaintances, he once more rose to leave.

"Hold," said Pitt, "I'd advise you not only to button up your pockets, but to wait till the captain and I are ready.—That passage is not the safest in the world for a solitary mortal with two hundred pounds in his pocket."

Harry recalled the horrors of Cut-throat Lane, which the darkness of a wintry night was not likely to render more inviting, and sat like a statue.

"Now, Marsloops, I want to know how many bales you could bring in that *tub* of yours?" asked Pitt.

"Why, for the matter o' that, let me choose the landing, and I'd bring a thousand as easy as fifty."

"Well, you could make sure of five hundred at any rate ; that would be close on three thousand pounds' profit, and all expenses paid, anyhow. Now if I could find a friend to join in a job like that, it's worth the venture—when could you do it?"

"I would'nt let these darks go by, or there'll be too much moon for that job."

"Right again, old fellow!—you can depend on your crew?"

"Reg'lar bricks, every one on 'em—you didn't see a soul on 'em this last job, and consequenshally they could'nt see none o' you—that's the way to stop 'peaching."

"Well, three thousand pounds aint to be sneezed at," said Pitt; "we'll think about it: these little catches cost as much as big ones, and the risk's the same."

During this colloquy a terrible struggle was going on between Harry's good and evil genius. He clutched his first ill-gotten booty, and, when the two knowing knaves talked as coolly about thousands as hundreds, the rebellious spirit of evil began to gain the mastery over his better judgment. His cupidity was again excited, and in spite of his good resolutions, Harry felt piqued that they did not ask him to join. Having endured so much for a paltry one hundred and fifty pounds, he could not suffer more for thousands. "One may as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb," thought he; with a thousand or two more, he could quit the place, and cut his hateful associates. Pitt saw it all, but spoke not, and, when they rose to go, Harry said, "Well, if you venture again just give me the chance—that's all." Pitt scarcely vouchsafed a reply; they descended the narrow stairs, and strolled arm-in-arm down the wretched lane, watching every opening with eager eyes as they passed. Having gained the main street, the captain whispered a few hasty words in Pitt's ear, took his leave, and disappeared in the darkness. Roughton and Pitt pursued the opposite route in sullen silence, till they reached the corner of the street at which the roads to their respective homes diverged, when Pitt, in a low but patronizing tone, said—"Just take care of that cash now. Look the notes over, and if you find any names scribbled on 'em just scratch a pen over 'em or convert 'em a bit."

"Convert 'em?" asked Harry; "what d'ye mean?"

"Why, names are easily convertible; turn Barnes into Barnesly; Pitt, into Bitteston; or Hunt, into Hunter; Pain, into Raintree; and so on. It would bother the scribbler to identify a note by a name so bedevilled, or to swear who he got it from—but, hark you! I'll tell you something better still; if a neighbour sends in a five or ten pound note for change, or to pay a bill, always have a few of those rogues handy; just substitute one for the other silyly, and pitch it over to that young greenhorn of yours, to write your neighbour's name on it—a proper precaution against fraud you know—and I'll warrant he'll swear by it as coming in the regular way of business; and no matter who has to account for its acquisition, so long as Sawney Sandys keeps you clear, and, if it turns out a forgery, why the loss is 'nt yours you know. They should never catch a weasel asleep; so keep your eyes open, and look out for squalls." Having delivered himself of this sage counsel, Mr. Pitt abruptly quitted his companion, leaving him to pursue his journey homewards, and to ruminate over the mystery of wickedness which every moment appeared to thicken around him. "Humble independence, ay, honest poverty," suggested his good angel, "is easier to be borne than the yoke of crime;" but he again convulsively clutched the accursed booty in his pocket and banished the reflection.

He found his wife anxiously waiting his return. "Jane, my love," said he, in a tone of affected cheerfulness, at which her eyes sparkled with a momentary pleasure, "there's two hundred and fifteen pounds, and two-thirds' clear profit," and, with these words, he threw the bank notes upon the table.

Her eyes fell mechanically upon the odious scraps of paper, and she mournfully replied,—“Peace of mind is a rich treasure, to barter for so much sordid gain.”

His cheek flushed, and thrusting the notes back into his pocket, he petulantly exclaimed—"You're never satisfied, but I'll go for more next time, and see what you'll say then."

He little dreamt how soon this rash resolve would be put to the test.

CHAPTER XIV.

"He wound snares round me; flung along my path
Reptiles, whom, in my youth, I would have spurned
Even from my presence; but in spurning now,
Fill only with fresh venom."—BYRON.

As opportunity served, Roughton busied himself with the scrutiny of the questionable notes that represented his ill-gotten gains. A few misgivings as to the prudence of putting them into circulation, detracted somewhat from their value. Some recollections of the cunning with which Captain Marsloops and Pitt had secured to themselves the gold which "tells no tales," excited an occasional flash of anger in his breast; but the "black and white" which Mundy so bluntly repudiated, had been by the adroit manœuvres of his trusty friends shuffled upon Harry, and he must make the best of it. He recalled the crafty counsel of the artful Mr. Pitt; and, as he laid his plans for giving effect to those subtle devices by which he could throw off the scent from himself, should any future attempt be made to trace those notes to him, the genius of that worthy rose greatly in his perverted estimation. He began to find a real pleasure in the exercise of that diabolical ingenuity in which the veriest thief rejoices, when proficiency in crime enables him to weave a net-work of mischief round the innocent to avert suspicion from his guilty self.

With these exceptions, and a few brief and painful altercations and recriminations between Harry and his wife, the hours rolled along, and something of the serenity, but not the confidence, which formerly reigned in that once happy home, was restored. At early dawn on Thursday, while Sandys was occupied with his usual avocations—taking down the shutters and sweeping the shop—his movements were narrowly watched by a pair of twinkling eyes which cunningly peered from the depths of a passage on the opposite side of the street. Presently, as Sandys was about to apply himself to the lighting of the little stove, the owner of those eyes stealthily emerged from his lurking-place, and, in the guise of a mendicant, approached the shop door, telling in whining accents a tale of woe.

Sandys gazed with mute compassion on the miserable lad who, barefooted and in rags and tatters, stood trembling in the cold. Sandys having no money of his own about him, sorrowfully replied—"My lad, I have nothing for you;" but the beggar entreated him to ask for a trifle from his master, who, he was sure, would not refuse him the value of a penny loaf.

During this interval Mr. Roughton entered the shop, and was about to eject the intruder, on hearing him repeat his petition for something to eat.

"Please, Sir," ejaculated the boy, "please, Sir, you know'd me once; I used to work for Mr. Pitt."

Harry started, and looking steadfastly at the upturned face, recognized his youthful ally Golightly; but with sudden presence of mind, resuming his angry tone, and winking as he spoke, said—"Be off, be off! you are an impostor," and affected to lay hands upon him, hoping that if he were the bearer of any written communication from Pitt, a chance of delivering it, unseen by Sandys, would thus be afforded.

The lad still implored relief, and pointed to his shoeless

feet with a well-feigned shiver. Harry drew back, and suddenly turning to Sandys, said—

“Well, the young vagrant is badly off for shoe leather; there is an old pair of mine under the stairs, go and fetch them.”

Sandys obeyed with alacrity, and no sooner was his back turned, than Jack announced that Pitt had entered on a “stunning job;” and as Mr. Roughton wished to be in for a thousand or two, he’d give him the chance, and they would meet at his house that very night to settle their plans.

“At my house!” exclaimed Harry.

“Yes,” replied Jack, “never twice at the same place; so at seven o’clock look out.”

At this moment Sandys returned from a hopeless search, and Roughton, observing him empty-handed, said—“Well, perhaps they have been thrown away, never mind; here’s sixpence for you; be off, and never let me see you here again.”

Jack thanked him, and folding his arms after the most approved mendicant fashion, crawled away.

“I hate beggars,” said Roughton, “but there’s no knowing whether they are deserving or not; has he ever tried it on here before, Sandys?”

“Not since I’ve been here; I never set eyes on him till now,” replied Sandys.

Harry was satisfied, and went back to the sitting-room.

“Jane,” said Harry, as he sat down to breakfast—“I shall want this room to-night at seven o’clock; so you’d better have a bit of fire in your bed-room.”

Jane looked intently at him, and asked who was coming, and why she might not be present?

“Why, because you’re so confoundedly squeamish, and I fancy you wouldn’t enjoy the company I may have, and I do’nt exactly know yet who may come.”

Jane grew pale, as the worst fears rose to her mind.

"Harry," said she, "I hope that hateful Pitt will not be one of them. I could bear with any one rather than that man. I implore you to have nothing more to do with him."

A scowl came over Harry's face as he replied—"He may or he may not be here, and you will just leave me to make my own arrangements, and I'll not interfere with yours; but understand, your company to-night will be better dispensed with."

Jane said no more, the conversation dropped, and her heart beat rapidly in fearful foreboding of some new evil.

Roughton by no means relished the idea of having his own residence selected, without his consent, as the rendezvous for a set of designing villains; and much as he had gone through, he had never realized so fully as at that moment, how hopelessly he was in their power, and to what a depth of degradation he had brought himself by an unholy league with such unscrupulous characters.

With the fear of exposure before his eyes, he lacked the courage to rid himself of their companionship, and trembled as the conviction came over him, that there were those amongst the band who would not hesitate, if offended, to betray him to glut their vengeance, even at the price of their own liberty. He felt that they had no reputation to lose, whilst, by association with them, he was imperilling his own fair fame. He looked again with greedy eyes upon his roll of notes, endeavoured to find some compensation for the misery he endured in the contemplation of still higher gains, and applied to his own case the questionable consolation which the novice in crime derives from the hackneyed adage, "As well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb."

Whilst those thoughts were flashing through his distem-

pered brain, conscience still struggled with him, and he with it.

"Seven o'clock!" said he to himself; "why that is the hour for the Rector's meeting; but I could not have shown myself there with any comfort, even if these fellows had not pinned me down for to-night. But what if the Rector should, as he sometimes does, call for me on his way?"

Roughton felt there was, despite his unjust suspicion of Sandys, an honesty about the lad which forbade the idea of asking him to tell a lie. He could not say—"Sandys, if the rector calls this evening, tell him I am gone from home." Still something must be done, for, far gone as he was in crime and deception, he was not yet proof against the shame of being discovered in such disreputable company at a moment when, but for his recent lapse from the path of rectitude, he would have been first and foremost in a better cause.

Recollections of the satisfaction and consolation he had always derived from his habitual co-operation with the rector in works of charity, presented themselves to his mind, but the taste or inclination for such pursuits appeared to have lost their hold upon him, and he began to conceive some dislike even to the rector himself, much as he shrunk from exposure to his disapprobation.

"I must get rid of him," said Roughton; and seizing his pen he wrote a hasty note, in which was inclosed a sovereign; and having sealed and addressed it, desired Sandys to run to the rector's and leave it, without waiting for an answer. Scarcely had Sandys got half way up the street, before a feeling of compunction arose in Roughton's breast, and for the moment he repented, but it was too late. He almost unconsciously applied to himself the odious epithet "hypocrite," and then with an indomitable resolution to brave it out, he struck up a stave of an old favourite song,

banished what he called childish scruples, sought imaginary peace in occupation, and so whiled away the hours till the almost dreaded evening came.

Punctually as the clock struck seven Mr. Pitt appeared, and without ceremony passed through the shop and entered the sitting-room. There sat Jane, who had made up her mind, come what would, to remain down stairs, and endeavour by the gentle restraint of her presence to guard Harry against falling into any snare that might await him; but the instant her eyes met those of Pitt, she turned away with an unconquerable feeling of repugnance, seized the only lighted candle in the room, and retired to her desolate chamber.

Presently Roughton entered, accompanied by old Jem, Swiveleye, and the discarded servant of old farmer Brooks. Jack Golightly, though not one of the party, hovered like an evil genius about the locality, carefully noting every person who passed to and fro along the adjacent pathways. Roughton's entrance into the room was greeted by a brutish laugh from Mr. Pitt, and a coarse observation on Mrs. Roughton's unceremonious departure with the candle, which he was pleased to designate "the little devil's impudence"—expressions which, had they been used by the same or any other spokesman a fortnight before, would have met with no other response than an indignant blow in the face; for, notwithstanding Roughton's natural amiability of temper, an insult to his devoted wife would have roused his anger to the highest pitch. And yet, now that his brutal associations had ruined that temper, and rendered him what is called a desperate man, he did not show, whatever he might have felt, the least symptom of resentment, but on the contrary, exhibited a sort of contemptuous acquiescence in the insult to his innocent wife.

The business of the evening was soon opened, and as speedily despatched. "It's all right this time," said Swiveleye; "I've seen Jimmy, and he'll make sure of the coast guard, step in hisself at the nick of time, with just one man, and seize the goods, then wink at our escape, and go snacks with us in the reward."

"Who's Jimmy?" asked Roughton.

"Jimmy? why, Cinderow to be sure! Don't you see, if we can only make it all right with a customs' officer, there's no risk, or next to none, and that's our game this time."

Roughton looked first at one and then another in puzzled amazement, and waited further disclosures to solve his difficulty.

"Well," said Pitt, "four tons, say £2000, duty included; Jimmy gets half as seizing officer, that's £1000; and what'll he stand out o' that, if we put it in his hands without any trouble? I don't think that'll pay very well anyhow."

But Swiveleye, with a look of sinister sagacity more easily imagined than described, expressed his surprise that Pitt couldn't see further than that, and forthwith offered an explanation, which was received with greedy delight by his attentive listeners. He apprised them that he had approached Cinderow with due caution, broaching the matter by very mysterious hints that he, Swiveleye, was up to something likely soon to come off, but did not think it worth his while to fish out and inform about other folks unless he could see his way, and then dropped the subject, leaving Jimmy to "chew the cud," as he called it, and seek him if the bait should take.

Cinderow's cupidity had got the mastery over him, and he did seek Swiveleye, who thus described the result—

"I told him if he'd stand half what he got by the job, I'd do my best to learn and let him into the secret. He offered me a third, but I told him I wouldn't stand that;

and the harder I drove the bargain, the more anxious he was, and at last says he—"I'm your man; honour bright between us." Since then I've been with him every night telling him little bits at a time, as if I'd just picked up the information now and then, and I've only polished him off within the last two hours."

Pitt mused over this communication with evident satisfaction, and at last exclaimed—"Well, doctor, you're a trump, and no mistake; Roughton and Jem and our new friend must know all, so you may as well out with it and let's know how we're to do the main business, if he's to have forty or fifty bales only."

Swiveleye proceeded to explain that that was only a blind for Cinderow, that he had worked on his fears and his avarice to make sure of getting the coast clear of the patrol, which nobody could do so well as a customs' officer, whom the coast guard would not suspect: "So you see," said Swiveleye, "we shall have a sham for them; land, say, twenty bales in one place to amuse Jimmy and his man, and run the rest in three or four other places while he is occupied with his fancied prize,—that's my way to get half of what *he* gets, and all the rest clear, and then we shan't have much cause to complain of the swag."

Pitt's eyes glistened with fiendish joy. Old Jem, after having listened attentively, and weighed every word, exclaimed in a bluff but satisfied tone—"It'll do, doctor, it'll do; and the gen'l'men may leave the rest to you and me, and Wakeful." The latter grinned his satisfaction, and, as his significant clincher of the proposed plan of operations, brought down his brawny knuckles on the table with a rap that would have done justice to an auctioneer's hammer.

"Well," said Pitt, "you know this comes off to-morrow night; the captain will lay-to near the broad cliffs, within

signal distance, half an hour after sun-down. Does Jimmy know the time?"

"Know the time? no! nor the place neither yet," said Swiveleye. "I promised to let him know as soon as I could make out for certain; but I don't trust him with that part of the secret, until he has no time to do more than I advise; and when old Jem and I have settled our plans, I must leave him and Golightly and Wakeful to carry 'em out with the help of Mr. Roughton and yourself, Mr. Pitt; for I shall go sneaking there with Cinderow, as a dirty informer against our own goods; and the joke of it is, I've persuaded him that old Garten, who went last week in his smack to Jersey, is the smuggler. Won't he watch old Garten's place pretty closely?"

A roar of laughter greeted this accomplished piece of perfidy and hypocrisy. Scarcely had the noisy chorus subsided, when the door opened, and in mute astonishment at the heterogeneous gathering, the rector stood before them. Harry turned pale as death, and immediately rising, hurried to the door; and signalling the rector into the shop, followed him, to make the best of his discomfiture.

To gain a moment's time for the invention of some new lie, which he felt to be inevitable, he waited for the rector to commence the conversation.

"Mr. Roughton," said the rector with a frigid politeness, "I called in my way from the meeting, to report progress to Mrs. Roughton, thinking that the result might be gratifying to her and to you, and to thank you for your note, its inclosure, and the interest you expressed in the good cause; but I must now request you to take back that sovereign, and—"

Here Mr. Roughton interrupted him, and with an assurance that he had arrived at an uncharitable conclusion, though the company in which he found him might justify

suspicion; then raising his voice, that the scoundrels within might catch a word or two, he added—"The fact is, Sir, having just returned home, I found these people—the pony race committee—waiting to request my patronage to their races, and to ask me to let Jane's famous little pony run for the subscription stakes! My refusal of this absurd request, and the terms in which I couched it had just excited the rude and provoking burst of laughter which your entry interrupted."

The rector looked incredulously at the speaker, and was about to reply when Pitt passed through the shop, and obsequiously taking his hat off to the rector, said—"Then we are not to have the little grey?"

"No, certainly not," retorted Mr. Roughton in a decisive tone.

"Well," rejoined Pitt, "I see no harm in a little amusement for the people, and I don't think the rector himself will gainsay that some folks are too squeamish, and so I'll wish you good night."

Harry breathed again, and, with a well-assumed coldness, bade Pitt good night, but intimated that, as he had nothing else to say, it would be more agreeable if he would take his committee with him.

"Very well," sulkily replied Pitt, returning to the room, where some loud talking ensued, not very complimentary to Mr. Roughton and what they called his methodistical notions. Parts of this discussion caught the ears of the rector, who, in the honest simplicity of his charitable disposition, was for the moment blinded by the appearance that matters had so naturally assumed, and, making a hasty apology for his previous insinuations, retired.

This was the signal for renewed mirth. Harry was complimented on his adroitness at humbugging a parson, and Pitt upon his skill in striking the nail on the head.

They esteemed themselves lucky that they had no grog on the table—a hint upon which spirits were introduced; and after a jolly carouse of an hour and a half, they parted, each to mature his plans for conducting his own share in the coming expedition.

CHAPTER XV.

"Swift-gliding mists the dusky fields invade,
To thieves more grateful than the midnight shade."

POPE: HOMER.

"Remember whom you are to cope withal—
A sort of vagabonds, rascals, and runaways."

SHAKSPEARE'S RIC. III.

NOTHING is more cheering to the good people of England than a bright sunrise. It is difficult therefore to conceive that anyone should find a particular cause for rejoicing in the advent of a cold, wet, murky day. Yet such was the morning of that Friday, the evening of which was devoted by Roughton and his associates to their seaside excursion, and they greeted it with delight. Portentous clouds, and heavy wreaths of grey mist and fog, loomed far and wide through the atmosphere, obscuring the sun, whose rays struggled hopelessly to penetrate the dense curtain which hung like a pall over the horizon. All nature assumed a sad and gloomy aspect; the drizzling rain, scarcely distinguishable from the surrounding haze, fell incessantly, to the discomfort of every luckless traveller whom necessity compelled to brave the inclemency of the weather. To whatever point of the compass he might turn his eye, no promise presented itself of any improvement in the dreary scene; yet, there were not wanting reckless spirits hardy enough to rejoice in the contemplation of it—men who, loving "darkness rather than light," revelled in the

prospect of that which to other minds suggested only wretchedness and discomfort.

Old Jem, Pitt, Golightly, and Wakeful were up and stirring ; to each had been assigned an active part in the preparations for the coming night. Swiveleye had chalked out his own stealthy course, and leaving the other worthies to the more active operations of the day, we will follow for a brief space the crooked paths of the doctor.

He knew that about four o'clock his new friend Cinderow would retire from the routine duties of the day to his cottage in the terrace overlooking the quay, and resolved not to obtrude upon him with any show of anxiety, but was equally determined, by some seeming accident, to fall in with him. He took his station under a gateway by which Cinderow would pass towards home, that he might keep a vigilant look-out for his approach. At length the officer appeared in view, and Swiveleye waited until Cinderow came within about twenty yards of his retreat, when he sallied forth as though he neither saw nor thought of the officer, and bent his steps towards the quay. Cinderow's eye was upon him, but he quickened not his pace. Swiveleye reached the corner of the terrace ; but instead of turning towards the officer's residence, he leisurely took the opposite direction. Cinderow paused. "What," thought he, "is the meaning of this ? I made sure he was making for my house ; I must not lose him ;" and then hastily consulting a memorandum book which he drew from his pocket, observed that there was no mistake as to the time, unless the rascals had changed their plans. Again hesitating, his first impulse was to hail the doctor, but a moment's reflection suggested that it might attract attention at a time when secrecy was advisable ; and, starting off at a tolerable pace in the direction taken by Swiveleye, he at length came up with him.

"Hey! doctor, is that you?" said he, as if in doubt.

Swiveleye turned with a well-affected start, and observed inquiringly—"Who'd ha' thought of seeing you here, Mr. Cinderow?"

"Oh, I was just going on to the watch-house for a moment, but it is not of much consequence;" adding in a careless tone—"Well, have you heard any more of that job?"

Swiveleye looked him in the face, and said—"Yes, but it's a poor little go; I don't think it's much worth looking after, so I thought I wouldn't bother you or myself any more about it; you see I might get into trouble by meddling with other folk's concerns, without doing either you or me any good." With these words he affected to move on.

Cinderow was piqued by this unexpected check upon his greedy anticipations, but did not choose to relinquish his game, if a seizure, however trivial, could be secured; so he stopped the doctor again, and begged he would follow him to his house, adding—"In about ten minutes; No. 4, you know." Cinderow then turned homeward. Seated in his little parlour, he waited impatiently the arrival of the doctor. Half an hour elapsed, and no Swiveleye appeared. Cinderow began to suspect some treachery; and, as angry emotions succeeded to impatience, he resolved to sally out in search of the culprit, when his ear caught the sound of a gentle tap at the door. Cinderow flew to open it, and ushered in the doctor, who, with an air of indifference, accounted by some commonplace explanations, for his want of punctuality in keeping his appointment. The two men seated themselves opposite to each other, and Cinderow resumed the subject he had at heart, by inquiring, in a tone of seeming heedlessness, whether the little job the doctor had before spoken of was a hoax.

"Well, not exactly that," replied Swiveleye; "but, as far as I can make out, they're not going to have a regular haul; it's only a few bales of leaf and stalk they expect to put overside from a lugger, and run ashore in one of her own boats, with a pair of hands at most; and it's my belief they mean to stow it in some of them cliff-holes till the coast's clear enough to fetch it away safely."

Cinderow mused for a moment, and then suddenly put the question, "Who are the parties, doctor?"

"Nay," replied Swiveleye, "I told you from the first I wouldn't blow them; it's as much as my life's worth, and I'm suspected already."

"Suspected by whom?"

"Why, you see, I chanced to fall in with one of Garten's men and two of his chums, at the 'Blue Boar;' so I slunk into a corner, unobserved, and shammed a nap, while their tongues was running pretty freely, and"—here he checked himself, and Cinderow, burning with curiosity, urged him on; but the doctor, affecting to have gone too far, said—"No; I've let out more now than I meant or ought; they saw me as I left the room, and if you and me are seen together I may get in for it, and for the little chance I see of getting anything, I should be better out of it."

This well-sustained appearance of reluctance was provoking enough; but Cinderow persevered, interlarding his questions and observations with flattering promises, to which the doctor coyly yielded; and having coaxed a couple of sovereigns on account out of Cinderow, under pretence of procuring the means for carrying off the seizure, he left Cinderow preparing to start in an hour and a half's time to the scene of action, within a quarter of a mile of which Swiveleye was to be in waiting with a light cart and horse, and a trusty driver. Half-past eight was understood to be the hour of landing; the spot was clearly

defined ; their signals of communication agreed upon ; and, by a piece of cunning for which Cinderow gave the doctor great credit, instructions were to be despatched by Cinderow to the coast guard, to point their attention towards Mortlake Head, in the direction of Beacon Point, with a view to divert them from the real landing-place, and thus prevent them, as Swiveleye shrewdly hinted, from dropping in and sharing the booty, which he still doggedly maintained was little enough for themselves, if they got it all. This eagerness to shut out all participation strengthened Cinderow's belief in the doctor's sincerity.

The better to comprehend these arrangements and the sequel, a brief description of the locality may be useful, particularly with reference to the spots indicated, and their relative bearings to, and means of access from, the town.

The broad river which runs from the town to the sea forms an acute angle with the coast ; the strip of land, which divides the two, extending some fifteen or twenty miles in length, and jutting down to the point, known as Beacon Point, where the river discharges itself into the blue water. So that to cross this narrow strip of land on any decent pair of wheels, with even a sorry horse, would not be the work of much more than an hour ; whilst a vessel of first-rate sailing qualities, with ever so favourable a wind, could not thread her way through the foul sands and mud banks, double the Point, and make the place of intended landing under several hours.

The little revenue cutter, the *Wasp*, was then lying at anchor in the river, just below the town. Alive to all this, and knowing it to be his duty to give the earliest intimation to the water-guard of any smuggling transaction on the coast, Cinderow laid his plans accordingly. He first despatched a note to the commander of the *Wasp*, apprising him of "a run" likely to be effected round

the Point, somewhere near Mortlake Head, of the precise particulars of which he was not in possession, and urging him to get the cutter under way with all speed; at the same time stating his intention to proceed by land, to co-operate with him and the coast guard on the spot, with whom, as he pretended, to save the commander a moment's trouble and delay, he would himself communicate at once. He then addressed an artful communication to our old friend the bulky lieutenant at the station, carefully directing his attention towards the Point, and the vicinity of Mortlake Head; urging him to be there with all hands by half-past eight at latest, and lie in wait for a prize.

Having sent off these missives, he put on an extra coat, an oilskin cape, and waterproof hat, sauntered off into the town, procured a horse and gig, called for one of his subordinates in the service, and proceeded with him in the direction indicated, by his very worthy informer, and right-trusty ally—the doctor; who, accompanied by an active lad as his charioteer, had preceded Cinderow in a cart.

CHAPTER XVI.

“ And now the thicken'd sky,
Like a dark ceiling, stood. Down rushed the rain
Impetuous, and continu'd till the earth
No more was seen. The floating vessel swam,
Uplifted; and secure with beaked prow
Rode tilting o'er the waves.”—MILTON.

ALTHOUGH the rain fell in torrents, it did not damp the spirit of adventure which animated the smugglers, nor shake the determination of the avaricious officer to pounce upon his prey. These various parties approached the scene of operations by separate routes and at different times; the object of the chief actors being to avoid premature contact, and, by assembling in small knots, to escape observation. The doctor and his companions protected themselves as best they could from the pitiless storm; the former wrapt in an old cloak, that might perchance have been at one time blue, or black, or brown, or bottle-green, but whatever its original colour, it now partook of those various hues, and, saturated with wet, clung to his lath-like figure in dank and drooping folds. His companion was attired as a waggoner's lad, with a sack thrown across his shoulders, in true country fashion, to serve the purpose of a cape, whilst a slouched wide-awake, pulled well over his sharp piercing eyes, gave a grotesque character to his rustic costume. Comfortless as Swiveleye looked, in comparison with his companion, his mind was actively occupied with the object of their journey,

of which his charioteer was fully cognizant, and many were the schemes they discussed for "hocussing the harpy," as they denominated the ingenious process of deluding an officer.

"Now, supposing the bait we've thrown into Jimmy's hands should'nt satisfy him, and he gets scent of the other lots?" said the doctor.

"Oh, trust me for bamboozling him," replied the lad; "even if I run *you* down a bit to gain his confidence."

Whilst planning this little conspiracy, they reached the corner of the narrow road which branched off towards the beach, and, having made the turn, they proceeded along this bye-lane until they came to a road-side dingle, where they drew up, according to prearrangement, and awaited the arrival of Cinderow and his man. The former, protected by an oilskin cape, and the latter by a waterproof pilot-coat and sou'-wester, experienced little discomfort from the rain; but neither felt quite at ease as to the good faith of their dubious informer.

Cinderow taxed the ingenuity of his man to divine who were Swiveleye's accomplices, or rather principals in this transaction; for he was sure the fellow was a tool in other hands. "Do you think the Gartens have anything to do with it?" said he.

"I rayther think not," replied the man; "for I heard only this afternoon as how the parson should say as he'd seen old Pitt and Swiveleye, and another or two, at Master Roughton's the other night; and I'm rayther queered to make out what they could be there for, without they'n draw'd him into this job."

After a short pause, Cinderow, as if talking to himself, repeated aloud—"Roughton! Roughton! Why, I saw him only a few days ago, with one of Pitt's gang, near the Blue Boar;" and then, recalling the doctor's

subtle story of the pretended conversation at that haunt of smugglers, his confidence in the main features of his informant's story was, with due allowance for Swiveleye's natural desire to avert suspicion from the real parties, somewhat restored. He resolved upon his course of action; observing, that as Roughton was a new hand, and full of money, he must be led on, and that if they came across him they must let him go unscathed, as it wouldn't do to "kill the goose that laid the golden eggs," before getting a good hatch or two.

Scarcely had he concluded these sage reflections before they approached the doctor's hiding-place. Descending from the gig, Cinderow walked straight to the spot, his narrow hatchet-face and twinkling eyes exhibiting, as he peered into the obscurity beyond, that expression of cunning which had procured for him the soubriquet of "the rat." Standing bolt upright, under the shelter of a tree, was the object of his search. The long dark cloak clinging to his gaunt figure, the dirty-white neckcloth, the black hat soaked with rain, and the cadaverous countenance of the doctor, gave him the melancholy appearance of some broken-down undertaker, or manager of a bankrupt funeral company, rather than that of a professional smuggler; nevertheless there was no mistaking the man. Cinderow at once abruptly opened the conversation with the point-blank query—"Where's Roughton?"

The doctor gave an involuntary start.

"It's no use gammoning me," said Cinderow; "so out with it; you see I know all about it."

Taken by surprise, Swiveleye half believed him, and trimmed accordingly. "Well, Master Cinderow," said he, "I may as well be outspoken at once; but arter all, you know, a man isn't expected to blow himself and his friends too; Mr. Roughton *has* a feeling in it, and that's the truth,

but the tub's mine ; they'd bribed my captain, and I warned him to anchor a distance off the shore, and put the stuff out with a boat, so you can't touch the *Phœbus*. As they took liberties with my sloop, it's all fair to get a share of her earnings ; so you see it isn't all for love of you that I let you into the secret."

Cinderow felt the force of all this, barring a strong doubt as to Swiveleye's ownership of the " tub," as he called the *Phœbus*, but resolved not to trust him an inch ; and, calling the waggoner's lad aside, asked him whether he knew what he was come for.

" Well, I dunna know justly," replied the lad in a tone of honest stupidity ; " but I reckon it's some'at o'er the left."

Cinderow, calculating on the raw simplicity of the rustic, pumped him with questions to worm out the doctor's secrets ; and was for the most part satisfied with the result, until the lad inquired with a naïve simplicity whether he should come to any harm if the stuff was walked off by the folks on the road home.

" What made you think of that ? " asked Cinderow impatiently.

" Why," said he, timidly glancing over his shoulder and lowering his voice, " that gen'lman in the long cloak told me it might be £5 in our pockets if we left the stuff somewhere on the road and swore it was reskied."

" Rescued, eh ? the villain ! " muttered Cinderow ; " a pretended rescue, eh ? So the cunning scamp thinks to make a tool o' me and a fool of you, does he ? Mark me, my lad, do as I tell you, or you may swing for it ; don't quit that cart when we've once got the goods aboard, and keep your tongue still." Then, suddenly turning round, he walked off, saying to himself—" Trust me for letting that stuff out of my sight when I once get hold of it."

This soliloquy did not escape the ears of the rustic, who slunk back to the doctor's side. Cinderow summoned his man to bring on the gig to the inn, called out to Swiveleye and his companion to remain quiet ; and, driving off, he left the doctor to the undisturbed enjoyment of the young scape-grace's account of his confab with Jimmy, and the success it promised.

As all the actors in this nightly drama were by this time converging towards the stage on which it was to be acted, a glance at the spot may serve the better to explain their movements.

Right ahead, in the direction taken by Cinderow, was the Oldburgh Cliff, where he anticipated effecting the seizure; a little to the left, but half a mile inland, was the "Ship and Anchor," to which he despatched his man with the gig; a little further to the left, along the beach, was a small creek called the "Devil's Grip," not far short of the coast guard station; then some three quarters of a mile to the right of the Oldburgh Cliff, was a rugged pass, known as "Deadman's Nook," defiling rather precipitously from the greensward to the shingle; and again, between two and three miles further on, stands Mortlake Cliff, previously alluded to as the locality to which the attention of the bluff lieutenant had been directed. To this latter place, smarting under his recent defeat on the same line of coast, the hot-headed commander, reeking for revenge, but with more valour than discretion, had, upon receipt of Cinderow's missive, hurried from his station, collecting and taking with him all his available force. They arrived a full half hour before any of the parties, except one, appeared upon the field, and in that one he was destined, in the sequel, to discover an old acquaintance. Cautiously approaching the indicated spot, he directed his men to drop gently down the rugged steps of the cliff, and lie close, while he crouched

just below the edge, on a projecting point, sufficiently elevated to enable him to sweep with his night-glass the surrounding locality, landward and seaward.

They had not long taken up their respective positions before the lieutenant discovered a dark object some fifty yards ahead of him, which, with some difficulty, he made out to be a cart, in which stood some one who occasionally leaned forward, as if striving to penetrate the gloom that overhung the waters.

Indulging in the various reflections which the incidents of his patient espionage excited, the lieutenant vigilantly watched the cart, waiting for the proper moment to strike the meditated blow, and triumphantly pounce upon the prize, which he already felt to be securely within his grasp. He had not been at his post more than half an hour before some indistinct sounds in the distance aroused his attention, but he could not quit the spot; nor were the objects which caused those sounds within his ken. They arose from two detachments of horses, carts, and men, who from different points traversed the open field. The first was under the command of old Jem, who stealthily conducted his forces towards Deadman's Nook, and reached it without interruption. The second wound its way, under the guidance of Mr. Pitt, to the Devil's Grip, with the care and caution of long experience and all the confidence of success, though the heavy rains had beaten down the mist, and the stirring gusts, which indicated alternate shiftings of the wind, began to blow more steadily, and to dispel the clouds that shrouded the tell-tale crescent of the moon. Although it was not so pitchy dark as the adventurous spirits could have wished, it was sufficiently sombre to conceal them from any tolerably remote observer, and yet light enough to facilitate operations, and relieve them more speedily from their perilous locality.

CHAPTER XVII.

"When souls that should agree to will the same,
To have one common object for their wishes,
Look different ways, regardless of each other,
Think what a train of wretchedness ensues."—**Rowe.**

"Alone and neglected while bleak rain and winds
Are storming around her, with sorrow she finds
That love had but number'd a few sunny hours,
Then left the remainder to darkness and showers!"—**Moore.**

POOR Mrs. Roughton ought not to be forgotten in the midst of the stirring incidents in which her husband was to participate. We have seen how the other chief actors had disposed of themselves towards the evening of this eventful day, and it must not be supposed that Roughton was a mere sleeping partner in the business. He was, however, destined not to be so, at least that night. About three o'clock in the afternoon of the day in question, Harry had left his shop, for a short time, to the care of Sandys, and, with more kindness than had usually marked his conduct of late, was conversing on different topics with his wife, preparatory no doubt to the announcement of an intended business engagement for the evening, of which she was not cognizant. Of the previous day's arrangements she had been kept in happy ignorance. Her mind, however, was evidently dwelling upon something mysterious and perplexing. Presuming upon Roughton's unusual good humour, she ventured to pave the way by the following inquiry—"Harry, what is *swag*?"

With a look of surprise, he replied, "Swag? why—cash to be sure."

"Then what does *jaws sewed up* mean?"

His eyes dilated, and his cheek reddened as the words fell upon his ear. "Where did you see or hear those expressions?" he hastily asked; but without waiting an answer, sternly demanded to know what women had to do with other people's affairs? "I'll sack that Sandys, I will; the fellow is a blab or a fool," intemperately added Roughton, for he was sure his wife could not have read that scrap of paper which he had thrown into the fire. His suspicion therefore fell on the hapless Sandys, who, he conceived, must have got a glimpse of it in spite of his precautions, when the lad innocently sought to obtain possession of the pharmacopœia.

Poor Jane was alarmed beyond measure: frightened at the menace, she tried to convince him that the lad knew nothing of it; but, in the blindness of his rage, he spurned her protestations, and vowed vengeance against the hapless lad. Still Jane pleaded as she would not have done for herself, and, despite his angry impatience, tremblingly withdrew from her pocket a singed and blackened piece of paper, conjuring him to look at that, which would explain the motive for her inquiries, without implicating the innocent Sandys. At the sight of that miserable scrap of paper, —reappearing as it were in judgment against him,—he stood aghast for a moment; then suddenly recovering himself, felt overwhelmed by remorse and shame at his unjust suspicions. The conviction in its glaring potency came upon him, that the domestic bliss and perfect confidence which had subsisted between them had never been disturbed until his fatal alliance with the writer of that vulgar missive.

In the first emotion of this re-action, he entreated her

forgiveness, and suddenly exclaimed—"I'll cast the villain to —;" but before the sentence was complete his eye again alighted upon the scrap of paper. The very thought of the misery he had endured from the fear of exposure, which had induced him to consign it to the flames, checked the half-formed, half-uttered vow, and revived the conviction that he was no longer free. In a paroxysm of rage and grief he seized the paper, and rushed from the room to his chamber, there to commune with himself in solitude, and seek to allay the angry passions which tormented him.

Poor Jane clasped her hands, and uttered an earnest ejaculatory prayer to the Father of mercies, that he would of his great goodness avert a calamity, in the belief of the existence of which she pardoned all his past conduct. For oh! grief of griefs! she believed that her Harry, her long-loved Harry, was bereft of reason—a lost being, no longer accountable for his actions or for the misery he had caused.

With this appalling conviction on her mind, after a vain endeavour to calm her emotions, she hurried after him, agonized by a thousand fearful apprehensions. Seated at the table with his face buried in his hands, he moved not at her approach. She stopped and watched him with contending emotions, hesitating to disturb him, yet anxious to break the oppressive silence, and to gaze upon the features which she, nevertheless, half shrunk from encountering, lest she should read in the wild expression of his eye, the confirmation of what, possessed with the one idea, her soul most dreaded.

Left to himself, he had rapidly revolved the whole in his mind—reviewed the circumstances which had so changed the aspect of his once happy home. Still, pondering with the deepest concern on his utter helplessness, and, with the strongly recurring consciousness that there was no escape from the trammels with which his accomplices had sur-

rounded him, he felt that retreat was impossible. Hopelessly conceiving that he could neither retrieve the past, nor avoid the present miseries of his position—he the more sternly resolved to secure at all risks the prospective advantages which lured him on. Avarice and moral cowardice again triumphed; and when Jane timidly laid her hand upon his shoulder, and gently whispered “Harry!”—he started at the voice, as if awakening from a dream, but suddenly drew himself up, and reverting to the paper which he still grasped, asked her in a half-smothered tone, where that came from.

“I will tell you,” said Jane, “I picked it up a few days ago in the garden, and have ever since been puzzled to guess what it meant; you know we both thought that our provisions, particularly the potatoes, had not lasted so well lately, and I had half suspected that that note might have come from some accomplice of Mary, for it said something about *vegetables well sold*; but,” added she, “I fear I have done her wrong.”

Harry listened in stoical silence, not unmingled with contempt, regarding her observation as the silly fancy of a woman, though he scarcely heeded what she said, for his mind was preoccupied with other matters. Instead, therefore, of replying, he looked with a troubled expression at the filthy bit of paper, then, suddenly jumping up, he thrust it into his mouth, and with a savage impetuosity, chewed it to a pulp, and ejecting it on the floor, crushed it beneath his feet.

How strangely the first inroads of vice shake poor frail humanity, and how nearly allied to superstition is that mental cowardice which trifles light as air awaken in a conscience-stricken breast!

This childish exhibition of passionate folly tended only to foster poor Jane’s fears for his sanity; but, as the

paroxysm subsided, a moment's reflection made him feel painfully susceptible of the ridiculous extent to which his foolish infatuation had carried him. With an ill-concealed feeling of shame he walked to the window and gazed earnestly into the street below, as if something there had suddenly attracted his attention. Unmanned by the honest simplicity and gentle innocence of the weak and loving woman, who, despite his unnatural and repulsive treatment, had, with such self-denying and devoted attachment, watched over him; he stood for some time with averted face. At length he so far got the mastery over his emotions as to be able to collect and redirect his ideas to the subject which engrossed his mind before that scrap of paper, returning like a spectre to his feverish imagination, had turned the current of his thoughts. Suddenly turning round and fixing his cold grey eye on Jane, who stood there mute as a statue, he addressed her in a tone as firm and collected as if nothing had happened to disturb his equanimity—"Jane, has any one else seen that paper?"

She had for the moment forgotten it; but, glancing at the scarcely distinguishable fragments on the floor, she replied—"No! not a soul."

"So far so good," said he, "and remember you don't mention it, or a word it contained, to any living being. I have an engagement this evening which may detain me several hours. If I don't return by ten o'clock, send Sandys off to bed, and sit up for me yourself."

There was something so oppressively calm and sententious in his restrained manner and tone of voice, that she scarcely felt reassured; yet she was afraid to ruffle him, and though anxious to prevent him leaving home, she dared not venture to remonstrate, but simply asked at what time he would leave, hoping that, if only an hour intervened, she might devise some method of

diverting his attention. He briefly replied—"About half-past six or seven;" left the room and descended to his shop. Oh! how anxiously did that devoted woman, carefully concealing her face behind the green curtain of the little window, watch every movement and expression of his countenance; but she discovered nothing to re-arouse her fears, except that now and then a sardonic smile played for a moment about his mouth, or a passing frown wrinkled his brow. If a customer came in, he appeared and spoke as usual, and when he shortly afterwards returned to the sitting-room, she ventured to ask whether he was obliged to go out that evening?

"Yes, ask no further questions," was his curt reply. Tea was brought in, and the meal having been despatched in silence, he rose and deliberately put on his upper coat and scarf without uttering a word, until his hand was on the door, when he turned round to repeat the injunction that she must not keep Sandys up a moment after ten; and, leaving her in ignorance of his reason, he passed through the shop and turned down the street.

Suddenly arousing herself from the saddening impressions which occupied her mind, she sprang up stairs, put on her bonnet and shawl, and following in the direction he had taken, hurried, through the heavily-falling rain, down the long dreary street, hoping to overtake him, or to trace his footsteps to some friendly roof, where she could feel assured of his safety. All her haste was vain; she had traversed the whole length of that street so rapidly, that he could not, without running, have gone that distance. Yet why should he run? She could think of no house of call for him on the way; and on reaching the first intersecting street she stood in a state of bewilderment, puzzled whether to turn to the right or to the left, or to give up the quest as hopeless. Racked by doubts and fears she

remained as it were spell-bound, lost in a reverie of perplexing thoughts, and regardless of the elements to which her delicate frame was exposed. How long she might have remained in this position it would be difficult to say, had no accidental circumstance arisen to rouse her from her painful musings. The noise of wheels echoed along the street, but, notwithstanding their rapid approach, she heard them not until the driver suddenly turning his vehicle round the corner, neither conscious of nor expecting to see any one there on such a night, drove rapidly by. She escaped the wheel, but the splash-board caught her as it passed, and violently hurled her against the kerbstone of the pavement. The driver hurried on, heedless or ignorant of the mischief he had done. Providentially, at that moment the Rector, who, notwithstanding the inclement weather, had, in fulfilment of his pious mission, been visiting a sick parishioner, emerged from the corner house. Throwing aside his cloak and umbrella, he gently raised the injured woman and led her towards the lamp, by the light of which he discovered, to his surprise, that the object of his kind solicitude was Mrs. Roughton. Painful explanations were inevitable; but, gratefully accepting the kind pastor's proffered arm, she retraced her steps, with a heavy heart, to her desolate home.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"By land, by water, they renew the charge,
They stop the chariot, and they board the barge."—POPE.

"Hope, fortune's cheating lottery!
Where for one prize, a hundred blanks there be."—COWLEY.

"There with like haste to several ways they run,
Some to undo, and some to be undone."—DENHAM.

WE left Cinderow, his man—"Friday," as he was facetiously called—with Swiveleye, and the waggoner's lad in the vicinity of Oldburgh Cliff, where we must again take them up.

Cinderow, having housed his horse and gig, returned with Friday to the rendezvous of the horse and cart, to make further arrangements. It was agreed between them that they should all remain there until the intended signal for the landing was given; and sufficient time had been allowed for at least the bulk of the goods to be got ashore; and that Cinderow and Friday should then rush in and seize them, whilst Swiveleye and the lad brought up the cart.

They had not waited long before they saw a light gently waving on the cliff. Cinderow's impatience would not permit him to remain longer; so, calling his man to accompany him, he directed Swiveleye and the lad to wait there until he whistled, upon which they were to proceed to the cliff. He then withdrew, stealthily proceeding with

Friday in the direction of the lantern whose light occasionally appeared and disappeared. As they neared the cliff and looked seaward, they observed a similar light in the offing; it twinkled for a moment, and was no more seen. Concealed behind a little clump of stunted trees, Cinderow and his man waited with becoming patience. Shortly after the answering signal from the *Phæbus*, a boat was lowered and lashed alongside the vessel, from which two or three sturdy men slid down, and with wonderful rapidity took overside about twenty bales of tobacco. Having received this freight, they let go the lashings. The men applied their brawny arms to the oars with such effect, that in a few minutes the sharp grating of the boat's keel was heard on the pebbly beach. A slight splash announced the vaulting of one of these hardy fellows from the boat into the water, and thence to dry land, where he deposited the bales as they were handed out by his comrades, whilst another boat was similarly lowered, freighted, and despatched to a different point. During these proceedings, Cinderow and his man, under cover of the darkness, having watched the spotsman ~~with~~ his lantern out of the way, carefully approached the cliff and concealed themselves; the former in a little chasm, and the latter behind a piece of shelving rock, to await the arrival and deposit of the contraband cargo. The hardy seamen, unapprised of treachery, cheerfully toiled up the rugged path, with bale after bale, till the last but one was deposited on the summit of the cliff. Either Cinderow had miscounted, or his curiosity and eagerness had got the better of his discretion, for he emerged from his hiding-place, and crouching down in the ravine, covered with his oilskin cape, peered into the pass below, when suddenly the captain hove in sight, with the last bale poised upon his broad shoulder. Climbing fearlessly on, he had to pass over the





P 119

The rencontre.

ridge of rock beneath which Cinderow had placed himself. The sailor had planted his foot upon the rock, bearing aloft his huge burthen, and was about to step down, when his keen eye descried the dark figure of Cinderow. He paused for a moment, and then challenged the obtruder with the gruff interrogatory—"Who are you?" Cinderow shrunk in alarm, and his tongue clove to his mouth. Down went the bale, and in an instant Marsloops, clenching his fist and raising it above Cinderow's head, bawled out with true nautical emphasis—"Speak, you lubber!" Cinderow recoiling from the stalwart sailor, instantly applied a whistle to his lips, on which signal Friday rushed from his lurking-place, and the captain, fearing an ambush, thought it time to look sharp after his boat and crew. Without another word he strode down to the beach, got his men into the boat, and, leaping in after them, shoved her off, and with all possible despatch regained his ship, where he had the satisfaction to find that his other boats had safely landed their cargoes, and returned.

Cinderow at once sent off his assistant for the cart, Swiveleye, and the lad, and, during his absence, he reconnoitered the adjacent locality. Approaching a gate at a short distance, he encountered Roughton, behind whom stood his phaeton and little grey pony; turning his lantern on his face he recognized him at once, and without more ado said—"Mr. Roughton, we are alone, don't fear me; I've only just time to say, that, if you do anything in this way again, run no risk, but let me know; I'll make the seizure, and we'll divide the spoil; the Chancellor of the Exchequer is, you know, a good paymaster;" and with these words he left him. Roughton, having ascertained that ill had befallen him and his accomplices, turned his pony's head and made the best of his way home, where he arrived about half-past ten o'clock.



The remember.

Precisely similar operations were proceeding simultaneously, right and left, at the two spots before indicated—Deadman's Nook and the Devil's Grip. Pitt and his party on the one hand, and old Jem and his fellows on the other, having secured their shares of the booty, made off as quietly as they could towards the point from whence they came, diverging, however, as they quitted the sea-board, from each other's route, so as to leave Cinderow between the two, but as remote as possible from each. Nevertheless, as these matters progressed it was not very practicable, with the unavoidable lumbering of the cart and the jingling of harness, to make their way entirely unheard. Faint sounds in the distance caught the ears of Cinderow, who listened with extreme perplexity, and no little uneasiness; for, with the irrepressible conviction on his mind, that he could neither trust Swiveleye, nor place implicit confidence in the seemingly honest and unsophisticated waggoner, it appeared to him injudicious, either to remain himself with them and the seized bales, or to leave his man.

Thus tantalized by doubt and irresolution, he scarcely knew whether to shape his course homeward with what he already had secured, or to make a detour in the direction whence the sounds proceeded, in the hope of a larger prize; for, in spite of all the cunning and satirical jeers of Swiveleye, and the comical asseverations of the country bumpkin, who stood at the horse's head ready to apply the lash, Cinderow could not divest himself of the notion that he had been duped for once, and most likely deprived of the lion's share. Although the lad told him his suspicions were "all moonshine," Cinderow, in a paroxysm of anger and vexation, threw himself down, and applied his ear to the ground with all the eagerness of an American Indian, the better to catch the uncertain sounds. At first they appeared to come from one direction, and then from the

opposite; again he fancied they might proceed from the coast-guard, returning disappointed of their expected prize; and, lest they should arrive in time to claim a share in his seizure, he determined to hurry homeward with it. The faint jingle of chains once more caught his ear; still the bales could not be safely deserted after the warning, true or false, that he had had from the lad, of sinister designs to defraud him by a rescue or a sham. In this dilemma he at length determined to make the best of his way with the booty; yet eager to learn the cause of his perplexity, but not daring to part with his man, he directed him to take the whip, and the doctor to mount upon the load, which he would follow on foot until they reached the "Ship and Anchor," where he would resume his vehicle and follow them.

He could not quit the spot, however, without taking some steps towards satisfying his curiosity as to what was going on; he therefore ventured to despatch the lad in the direction of Deadman's Nook, to reconnoitre, if possible, unobserved, and to rejoin him by means of the footroad to old Brookes' farm, on the highway, where he would wait his report of what he might discover. The lad, with a well-affected stolid reluctance, complied, muttering something about the chances of being knocked on the head by smugglers, or losing his road; but Cinderow gave him a few words of encouragement, mingled with promises, upon which the lad marched off with a somewhat dogged step, in the direction indicated, maintaining his slow and seemingly reluctant pace until distance and the shadows of night put them beyond each other's ken, whereupon the young rascal took to his heels, and pursuing the same course, careered along with the alacrity of a four-year-old.

During the time thus occupied by Cinderow, from his first entry on the scene to his withdrawal from the field,

the bluff lieutenant had remained true to his task, keeping watch and ward on the heights of Mortlake Cliff, expecting every moment the arrival of some little bark or schooner, for whose illicit freight the cart, which the lieutenant had discovered a little way ahead, was evidently waiting. For more than three quarters of an hour had the lieutenant kept his eyes rivetted on the cart and its occupants, with the exception of a furtive glance now and then into the offing, which he occasionally swept with his night-glass, but nothing hove in sight. Presently he descried two or three objects in the cart. "Those fellows," said he to Rogers, whom he kept near him, "are growing impatient; I make out three heads above the cart-side; surely they are up to something now." The next moment he lost sight of two of the number; and the other, raising himself in the cart, held out something in his right hand, which presently emitted a faint light, the rays of which darted seaward. "A signal! a signal!" muttered the lieutenant; "keep a sharp look out." He had no sooner spoken these words, than a rumbling noise at some distance in the rear attracted his attention. "Hark!" said the lieutenant, "there's something unusual going on towards Deadman's Nook; go, Rogers, reconnoitre and bring me word directly." Rogers started instant, the lieutenant resumed his watch, and all was still; when suddenly one of the poor fellows, drenched to the skin and shivering with cold, gave a tremendous but involuntary sneeze, whereat the lieutenant waxed angry, and threatened to shoot him if that sound were repeated. The poor fellow, pinching his offending nose, was trying, between a cough and a sneeze, to say he could'n't help it, when one of the officers pulled his lieutenant by the sleeve and pointed to the south'ard, where a dim light appeared to be dancing on the waters and gradually nearing the coast. Rogers and the noise in the rear were forgotten in

a moment, and all eyes were bent upon this floating apparition, when a second signal blazed away from the cart for a moment or two, and a little cutter presently hove in sight. "There she is," said the lieutenant; "in ten minutes she will be ours; let some of them land before we strike; as we've no boat, lie still till I give the word." A dead silence reigned; the ensuing ten minutes seemed an hour to the eager lieutenant and his men. At length the cutter came with a dash through the surf and buried the forepart of her keel in the sand; out jumped two or three of the crew, and, to the surprise of the lieutenant, away went horse, cart, and driver at full speed.

"Follow," cried the commander of the cutter, springing to the beach with his three remaining men.

"Charge!" cried the lieutenant; and in two minutes he and his men were hand to hand with the ship's crew and their commander, who, finding themselves outnumbered, became prisoners to a detachment of the coast-guard, whilst four of the lieutenant's men made themselves masters of the vessel. Hardly was this accomplished before, to their utter chagrin and disappointment, they found the new prize was no other than the revenue cutter, the *Wasp*, and that their prisoners were her crew. Sulky and brief were the explanations they exchanged, and off went the coast-guard in pursuit of the runaway culprits with the horse and cart, half believing that they had carried off a part of the prize and had only been disturbed and deceived by the cutter, whilst waiting for the remainder. The road was blind and rough, the necessity for speed was no longer urgent, as the cart had slackened its pace, so that, on nearing the highroad, the coast-guard were nearly up with it, when smack went the whip, and off again flew the horse with the pursuers close behind. Whirling into the road the driver saw right ahead a laden cart followed by a

horse and gig; sure enough it was Cinderow with his prize, who, on the sudden apparition of an empty cart and several men on the run behind, made sure that the threatened rescue was no sham.

"Jump up and take the reins," cried he to his man; "drive for your life, I'll follow you;" no sooner said than done, away they went as hard as they could go. The foremost of the coast-guard headed the fugitive horse of the empty cart and arrested his progress, till the thick-winded lieutenant came up, puffing and panting like a broken-winded locomotive engine. A cordon was instantly formed round the cart and its lonely driver, as if they expected every moment to see three or four fine fellows spring up, armed to the teeth, to defend the two-wheeled citadel; but the solitary occupant sat with undisturbed composure and looked down upon the formidable guard with the most stoical indifference. The lieutenant was some time before he recovered his breath, so the rustic charioteer was the first to break the silence.

"Well, gen'lmen, what might ye happen to wa-ant wi' me."

The lieutenant startled at the voice, which he thought he had heard before, jumped upon the shaft, gazed into the fellow's face, and exclaiming—"Wakeful!" seized him by the collar, forgetting in the excitement of the moment, that he had as yet proof of nothing to warrant detention or assault.

"Paws off, Pompey," said Wakeful in a taunting tone, "or maybe ye'll find y'rself in the wrong box, Master Brass Buttons."

The lieutenant relaxed his grasp, reflected a moment, and then asked—"Where are the other men who were with you a little while ago?"

Wakeful pointed down into the cart, and said—"There

they are, Maister Blue Jacket, I'll gie thee a light to look at 'em ;" and with this, he opened and turned the blaze of a dark lantern on two or three old sacks at his feet, which he immediately picked up, and hanging one upon a pitchfork, and the other on a shovel, he stuck them bolt upright against the side of the cart, exclaiming with a jeering laugh—"There be my companions."

The trick was so obvious, and the laughter it excited so infectious, that none of the men could refrain from joining in it. The lieutenant looked daggers at them, and was again about to proceed with his interrogatories, when Wakeful interrupting him, said—

"I tell 'ee what, Master Roundabout, y'r wasting time ; didn't thee see a loaded trap or two right ahead yonder, when ye came up ; now I'll pound it they'n got some 'bacca there : why do'sn't thee follow that?"

The lieutenant looked puzzled, and Wakeful added—

"Sarcy as yu'v bin, I'll gie you and some of y'er fine fellows a lift and drive arter 'em, if you'll sport five shillings for the ride."

They had seen the cart, and noted that it had disappeared on their approach. They felt the force of the taunt that, while they were wasting time with an empty cart and its saucy occupant, they might be losing sight of a better prize. Taking the fellow at his word, the lieutenant and three of his men mounted by the side of Wakeful, and started off in pursuit of they hardly knew what. A cart-horse gallop of three or four miles brought them to the four cross roads, just beyond which they descried the fugitives, flogging in vain the ribs of their jaded horse. Down jumped the lieutenant and his men, and bounded eagerly up to the cart, behind which Cinderow and his man, who had alighted, stood with their pistols cocked.

Upon the approach of the lieutenant Cinderow cried out,

"If any man attempts to touch this cart, I'll—I'll shoot him—I'll shoot him. In the Queen's name—I'll shoot him."

"Why zounds, Cinderow, is that you?" vociferated the lieutenant; "what the deuce did you run for, you booby, bringing us after you on this fool's errand?"

Cinderow explained that he had had warning of an attempt at rescue, and fancied that it was about to be verified, when he saw them after him.

"Then you've got a prize, eh?" asked the lieutenant, with ill-concealed mortification.

"A mere trifle," said Cinderow, and after the exchange of a few questionable compliments and a little badinage on both sides, Cinderow bade them good night, and pursued his route.

The lieutenant and his men faced about and regained the cross roads, but Wakeful, heedless of his well-earned five shillings, had availed himself of the squabble between the pursuers and pursued, quietly to draw off his cart along the greensward of the diverging road until out of hearing, and then made the best of his way home by another, though more circuitous route. The lieutenant and his party sullenly pursued towards the station their dreary march, the silence of which was broken only by the measured tramp of their feet, and an occasional oath or growl of disappointment, as the various events of the evening presented themselves in one ludicrous light or another to their mortified minds.

CHAPTER XIX.

"They tug, they sweat, but neither gain nor yield
One foot, one inch, of the contended field:
Thus obstinate to death they fight, they fall.

* * * *

As when two scales are charged with equal loads,
From side to side the trembling balance nods;
Till, pois'd aloft, the resting beam suspends
Each equal weight, nor this nor that descends:
So stood the war.

POPE: HOMER.

IN narrating the events detailed in the preceding chapter, poor Rogers and the lad, for whom Cinderow had promised to wait on the highroad, have been lost sight of. Both had been despatched by their respective commanders to act the spy. Rogers had lost no time in obeying his lieutenant's orders. Deadman's Nook was gained just in time to ascertain the fact that a cart, accompanied by two or more men, was rapidly receding from the shore. To make sure of the fact, he hastened after it with more courage than prudence, forgetting that if he got near enough to play the spy too closely, other eyes, as good as his own, might light on him.

Old Jem was not the man to sleep on such an occasion, and, detecting the approaching figure of poor Rogers, he bade his accomplices make the best of their way and leave him to deal with the sneaking scout, or "may be," said he, "the whole gang of Philistines will shortly be on our track." Old Jem was one of those reckless and determined spirits, who, on an emergency, would brave any danger, heedless of consequences; always ready to throw himself

in the gap between friends and foes, at the risk, if necessary, of his own life or liberty. Having summarily dismissed his companions, he resolved at all hazards to secure their safe retreat, and abruptly turned round to face the stranger. The habit of the smuggler, in those days, being to decamp at the prospect of discovery, Rogers was surprised to see one of that class deliberately approaching him. Could he mean to make some traitorous communication by which to save himself at the expense of his comrades? or did he mean mischief? Rogers did not half like his position, and, though no coward, reflecting that it was his duty to seek for aid rather than to fight at such a moment, he retreated towards the cliff, to regain the foot-path; but old Jem, quickening his pace, speedily lessened the distance between them, upon which Rogers started off at a run. Old Jem, as active as a cat, gave chase, and the officer finding his pursuer close upon his heels drew his pistol, not for the purpose of maiming his adversary, but of giving an alarm, which would bring him timely aid from his brother officers. Pointing the pistol skyward he pulled the trigger, but two hours' exposure on such a night had damped his powder. Old Jem was near enough to hear the harmless click, but as there was not light enough to enable him to see that the muzzle of the weapon was averted, his suspicions suggested that it was levelled at himself. With the bound of an infuriated tiger, and vowing vengeance, he sprang upon the unhappy Rogers. Violently struggling to free himself from the savage gripe of his enemy, the startled Rogers essayed to raise a cry, but Jem's hand was on his throat in a moment, and the stifled voice died in an inarticulate gurgle. With the fury of desperation Rogers struck his antagonist a blow, but that blow was not returned, old Jem being preoccupied with a deadlier vengeance: grappling the retreating officer with redoubled



The struggle.

F. 129

force, he urged him, despite all resistance, step by step, to the very verge of the cliff. The dull roar of the breakers, and a glimpse of the white surf, dimly visible in the dark obscurity of the beach below, warned Rogers of his impending danger; a terrific hand-to-hand struggle ensued, but all his exertions seemed unavailing. Jem planted himself with dogged determination for a final throw. Rogers felt that one or other, or both, must perish in the deadly strife; and, revolting as was the thought of blood, the instinct of self-preservation prevailed over every scruple. With hair erect and a clammy perspiration on his brow, he nerved himself in this moment of danger and despair for the decisive effort, and putting forth a degree of strength almost superhuman, he raised his foe from the ground and poised him for a moment over the shadowy abyss. His foot receding, in this last effort, from the slippery turf, he involuntarily relaxed his grasp, and Jem, availing himself of the critical moment, grappled poor Rogers with the energy of a giant, and hurled him over the fearful precipice; but Rogers, seizing the skirt of Jem's coat as he fell, drew him after him, and both rolled helplessly over the beetling crag.

A piece of projecting rock a few feet below fortunately interposed, and the two wrestlers fell, one on each side of the projection. Rogers clung with an agony of despair to the skirt of his foeman's coat, which, stretched across the rock that separated them, constituted the sole link between them and impending death. Paralysed by the sudden shock, they hung face to face for some time before they realized the horrors of their fearful position; then as it were by one consent, each endeavoured to find some footing to secure his own safety, but the saturated chalk crumbled beneath their feet. In this state of frightful suspense, Rogers, grasping with both hands the coat to which he

clung, perceived that the burly figure of his antagonist was gradually rising, whilst the coat was slipping towards himself, and he receding slowly downwards. Jem's vigorous limbs had ploughed channel after channel in the treacherous soil, until at length he had found a resting-place for his right foot on a mass of chalk and flint stones, by the aid of which he had already got his left knee on the top of the rock, and saw a means of escape, if he could only detach himself from his foe. The latter, scarcely aware of Jem's design, from inability to see his actual position, sought to work upon him by suggestions for their mutual safety—"I have no enmity towards you," said he; "give me your hand, let us help each other."

Jem glared upon him with a gloating satisfaction and replied, as he drew his knife—"I'd sooner die than save a wretch who would have shot me like a dog."

These words fell like a death knell on the ear of Rogers, who, as he saw the knife gleaming above him, exclaimed—"God forgive *me*, and pardon *you*."

In another moment the fragile garment, by which alone Rogers was suspended, would have been severed by Jem's relentless blade, when a voice above arrested the villain's design, and glancing upwards he saw the twinkling eyes of Jack Golightly looking on with a fiendish gratification. "Give me your hand, Jem, and let the beggar go," said the young rascal.

This interruption had given Rogers breathing time, and he suddenly exclaimed—"Jem, if that be your name, I declare to God and you I did not mean to shoot you; I pointed in the air intending to give an alarm; I only did my duty, why should I die for that?"

"Very true," said Jack; "give a hand, Jem, and I'll help to pull you both up together; it looks tarnation queer down below there!"

Jem's thirst for vengeance was somewhat subdued by Rogers' declaration, for there was a truthful earnestness in it which he could not help believing; but Jem was an old soldier, and resuming his knife, he looked down upon poor Rogers, and in a sepulchral tone, enough to make the bravest quail, he said—"Swear by all that's holy, you wont peach, or I'll cut the thread your life hangs on."

Poor Rogers, half fainting, said—"I swear, I swear," and in five minutes the two deadly foes again stood side by side upon the brink of the abyss; and Rogers, swooning, fell into the arms of Jack. Whilst poor Rogers was recovering from the effects of his overwrought exertion, towards which the two worthies rendered every aid in their power, Jack recounted the events of the night so far as he was concerned.

"But what brought you here just in the nick of time?" asked Jem; "I thought you were waggoner's lad to old Swiveleye, and sworn slave to Jimmy Cinderow for the night?"

Jack laughed heartily as he replied—"Ah! and that sent me here. He took me for some poor noodle picked up by the doctor, and thought he could trust me better than Swiveleye, so the old fool, hearing something going on out this way, sent me to play the spy for him, because he dar'nt trust his man Friday away."

Jem asked—"Why not? he'd got the stuff safe enough had'nt he?"

Jack replied—"O yes, but don't you see I gave him a sly hint that old Swiveleye wanted to cut off with it and pretend a rescue, and I thought he'd ha' bit his rat's nails off when he heard your team across here and smelt the 'bacco, but durst not leave the prize he'd got. Our chaps are all safe off, I'll pound it;" then turning to poor Rogers, who showed symptoms of returning vigour, he call'd out to him

—"Well, how goes it, old fellow? Drink this;" and he gave him a dram from a small brandy bottle. Rogers rose, and after a hearty shake of the hand with old Jem, he left him and Golightly to trudge home. Wending his dreary way towards Mortlake Cliff, he fell in with the crew of the *Wasp*, but could learn no more of the lieutenant than that he had started with a detachment in pursuit of the cart, and had not returned. So much of his own story as was consistent with his oath was soon told, and a comfortable berth assigned to him on board the cutter.

CHAPTER XX.

"Seriously around surveying
Each character, in youth and age,
Of fools betrayed, and knaves betraying,
That played upon this human stage."—COOPER.

"I fish for fools, he is mine own, I have him,
I told thee what would tickle him like a trout;
And as I cast it, so I caught him daintily."—FLETCHER.

THE morning of Saturday dawned with more than usual brightness for the season of the year. The rains of the preceding day and night had cleared the air; a refreshing breeze was stirring, and the twilight had scarcely penetrated the little chamber occupied by Harry and his wife, before she was up and dressed, though suffering from a violent cold caught the night before. She left Roughton in a sound sleep, from which she had no desire to disturb him, until breakfast should be nearly ready. He had reached home with comparatively little fatigue, at about half-past ten. The rector had long quitted the house, and Sandys had retired to rest. The success of the evening's adventure, the lucky escape of all personal risks on his own part, together with the singularly assuring words of encouragement with which Cinderow had greeted him, at a moment when he might have made him prisoner,—all had combined to bring him home in good time and cheerful spirits. Jane concealed from him the cause of the indisposition from which she was evidently suffering, and joined

him in a nice little supper which she had considerably prepared. She was ignorant of the business which had withdrawn him from home, and ventured not on any inquiries for fear of betraying the part she had taken in her anxiety about him. They had then retired for the night in better spirits than usual, and Jane had risen with alacrity to see that all was comfortable by the time Harry should come down to the morning meal.

She turned her steps towards the kitchen, where to her surprise she saw Pat Murphy, the man by whose occasional services her favourite pony was groomed, and the family shoes and knives cleaned. "What are you doing there, Pat?" asked Jane.

"What is it I'm doing, did ye say? Its well ye may ask that now," replied Pat. "Isn't it a bucket a warm wather I'm wantin'—ye niver see sich a sight in yer life, ma'm, as I've seen this blessed mornin'. Sure as I'm here, ma'm, the Devil's bin riding or dhrovin that darlint pony, he has."

Jane knew too well Pat's uncontrollable volubility to interfere with him, until he had run himself to a stand still, so she allowed Pat to proceed.

"Well, ma'm, as I was obsarvint, its warm wather I want, for a bran mash, don't ye see? Here's that pony, as I supped up warm and comfortable last night at six, wid a skin as smooth and as bright, beggin' yer sweet pardon, as the silk ye've got on now, and behold ye, he's all bespathered with mud and dirt, and as wet as if he'd been dhrawn thro' the Shannon, sure enough an' he is, and the stable door locked all the while, just as I left it ma'm; an' sure enough it's the Devil, and no mistake, that's giv' him that cough."

Poor Jane saw through the mystery the moment Pat opened his eloquent communication, and she felt, as he

concluded, who the Devil was that had thus abused her pony, if the saddle was put on the right horse. She was anxious to stop the colloquy, but Pat was not so easily put down.

"A pretty pashun the Masther will be in, he will, when he finds out the bruthal thraitmint yer own darlint pony has met wid; and plase, ma'm, it's afore dark I'd like to sup him the winter nights, or not at all at all, for I don't like the company he's bin in, by no manes."

This Hibernian discourse, and the many home truths with which Pat unconsciously interspersed it, fell painfully on poor Jane's ear. Brutal enough! thought she, but she did not give utterance to the feeling, and scarcely knew what to reply, when Pat recommenced with greater volubility than ever, as Harry, who had overheard part of the dialogue whilst dressing, entered the kitchen, and to Pat's utter surprise ordered him off, in an imperious tone, telling him to go and clean the pony and harness, without more ado.

"It's the Devil may clane him for me," retorted Pat, whose Irish blood was up, "for none but the Devil 'ud ha' thraited a harmless brute baste in that way, an' he may be afther doin' his own dirty work for me."

Roughton approached him with an angry scowl, and, beckoning to the door, bade him begone to his work. Pat did not hesitate long, but doggedly retreated, quailing before his master's determined frown. Harry marched moodily into the sitting room, where Jane presently joined him. She was passionately fond of that grey pony, and whilst breakfast was proceeding, she ventured to remark how strange it was that poor Taffy should have been found in such a condition.

"Do him good," said Harry, gruffly, "he wants work, and you'd have thought so if you'd seen him go last night; he whirled me round the corner with the speed of a racer,

and almost upset some fool of a woman, who stood there in the rain, as if she were waterproof."

Jane shuddered, but timidly asked—"Then you took him, Harry?" The reason she had missed her husband on the previous night, down the long street, was now palpable enough. He must have been in the stable when she left home.

"Took him, to be sure I did, and why shouldn't I?" observed Roughton petulantly.

"Oh, I don't complain of that, Harry; but do you know who that poor woman was, and what became of her?" asked Jane, her voice trembling with emotion.

"Knocked over, but not hurt I guess; but what became of her I neither know nor care," retorted Harry. Jane burst into tears, as if this utter heedlessness were as intentionally as it was really, applicable to herself. "You carry your morbid sentimentality for these drabs of street-walkers to a pretty high pitch Jane, I think," said Roughton somewhat soothingly.

She could control herself no longer. How changed in heart and conduct was her so recently fond and considerate husband, thought she, as she replied—"Harry! that unhappy drab was your own wife! yes, it was your once beloved Jane, whose unconquerable affection and anxiety for you induced her to expose herself to the pitiless storm in her anxiety for your safety, and you ran her down as you would a dog! There was a time when Harry Roughton would not have crushed a worm."

In stupefied amazement, and not without some feeling of compunction and self-reproach, he sat for a while as though the power of speech had left him. Mutual explanations, and painful reflections upon the events just passed, naturally ensued; but these we must pretermit to narrate what occurred elsewhere.

The two heavy loads of tobacco which—by the clever series of manœuvres already detailed, had got clear of the Customs and the coast-guard—had been successfully borne off in opposite directions, and deposited in temporary hiding-places, a few miles from the town. The next care that occupied the minds of the smugglers, was to get it safe into the hands of the ultimate receivers. As the two loads had been conveyed by different parties, each responsible to his principal, the secret of each was his own; the fact that they would not trust each other more than necessary, furnishing the most striking commentary on the real characters of these associates in crime. This mutual distrust was not without foundation. From the turn that events had taken, Swiveleye was not cognizant of the localities chosen and adopted either by old Jem's party, or by that of Pitt. Each of these had to devise his own time and means of getting home his booty, and to determine what hands he should employ; but neither of them cared to confer with or trust the doctor, whilst his desire to be consulted and to aid arose only from an innate conviction that the more he knew of them and their movements, the better was his chance of securing a liberal share of the proceeds of the venture as the price of secrecy. The greater part of Saturday had worn away; Swiveleye had crossed the paths of Pitt and Jem at intervals during the day, yet there was no sign of a desire for his advice or services, and he felt piqued. "Well," said he to himself, "they may seek me if they want me; and if they don't, I know my own course."

Mr. Pitt placed great faith in his new acquaintance, Wakeful; he discovered in him those germs of villany which make their possessor unscrupulous and bold in action, and at the same time stealthy, cunning, and taciturn. There was something about him of that adroitness in the

adaptation of character which so distinguished his precocious friend, Golightly; a ready tact which would avail him in case of sudden emergency; that *sang froid* which, in a good cause, is called fortitude in moments of difficulty and peril. Pitt, therefore, was content to give up Golightly to old Jem, and accept the services of Wakeful on this occasion. He therefore summoned him to his counsels. "Now Wakeful," said he, "you played your part well, and gammoned the lieutenant in good style; now I want you to take the charge of that stuff under the railway arch; it musn't see daylight in those canvas wrappers or 'twill be nailed at once; I've secured Tom Smith's hovel behind his carpenter's shop, outside the town. He will have packing cases ready to-night, so you must get the bales safely there, and see them packed and directed in regular business style."

"Well," said Wakeful, "I'm your man; but how am I to bring 'em three miles in the night? I can't carry 'em on my back."

"Wait a bit, my good fellow, and I'll tell you—Here's a suit of clothes that will, anyhow, justify the wearer in riding in a cab; put them on, and at ten o'clock call the last four-wheeler on the stand at the end of North Street, but mind you make no mistake. Look out for a short, thick-set, red-faced jarvey, and hail him as 'John the Baptist;' if he answers to that name, jump in and drive clean out of the town before giving him further orders; I shall follow with another trusty man." This scheme being duly concerted and acted upon, Pitt and Wakeful succeeded to their hearts' content; their booty was safely housed and packed. It only remained for Wakeful to convey the packages, as best he could, to the premises of Mr. Mundy, the tobacconist, a work of some little risk, however well the packages might be disguised.

These operations were studiously concealed from Swiveley; every inquiry that he made, direct or indirect, either of Pitt or Wakeful, was ingeniously baffled or curtly evaded. He tried Roughton with no better success; in fact Roughton, having left these details to those who were more conversant with such matters, could tell the doctor nothing; but the latter attributed his unavoidable reserve to intentional distrust, and the stronger his own conviction was how little he deserved confidence, the greater grew his hatred of him who withheld it. Something had evidently transpired between Swiveley and Cinderow; probably within hearing of that bright spark, Golightly, which had made all parties suspicious of the doctor. Even Golightly, with all his cunning, could not effectually conceal his misgivings when Swiveley approached him; nevertheless, he invited him to take a glass with him at the "Blue Boar," and talk matters over. Swiveley, with ill-concealed satisfaction, closed with his companion, and in two hours afterwards they were snugly seated before a comfortable fire, with a formidable jug of good brown ale between them. Warming under the influence of these cheering accessories, Golightly became more communicative, and the doctor did not let slip the chance of worming out all the information he could obtain from his youthful companion. With many artful wiles and devices, that would have done credit to a first-rate diplomatist, Swiveley became master of a scheme for the transport of the smuggled goods, which almost put his own genius for contrivance to the blush. The road by which the goods must pass was rather a dangerous locality for such a venture, and, as suspicions were rife that Cinderow's seizure was only a fragment of the proceeds of a "great run," there was every reason to believe that the suspected neighbourhood would be diligently watched. How could they safely traverse the great road in open day,

with such a cargo! At night it would be still more dangerous. There was no alternative but to put a bold face upon it, and achieve the difficulty in broad daylight. "A hearse and two mourning coaches," said Golightly, "will do the business; we can bury the stuff in old Blakely's dungheap till the nine days' wonder has blown over, and a rare merry bur'in' we'll have: hurra for a mock funeral! What d'ye think o' that?" and Golightly gave his friend a triumphant, hearty, patronizing slap on the shoulder.

"Capital!" exclaimed the doctor; "I never heard tell of a more knowing dodge in all my life. Name your day, my lad."

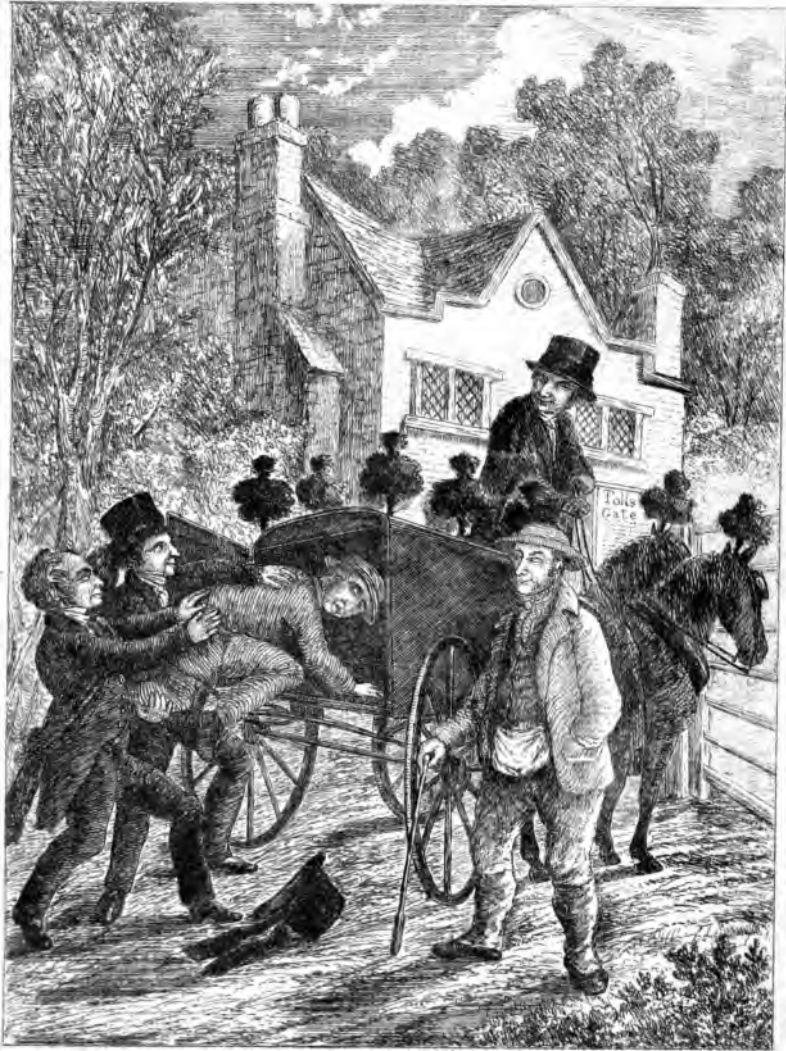
Jack took another swig at the ale, and replied—"On Monday the game is to come off by eleven o'clock; not a minute later they'll pass through the toll-gate, and you'd better station yourself on Red Rose Hill and keep a sharp look out, for there's no knowin' what may turn up, and a pair of eyes are useful." Whether the doctor thought this an ironical reflection upon the obliquity of his own visual organs or not, Golightly could not tell, but he observed a very queer expression in Swiveleye's countenance, and muttered to himself—"That vagabond's a traitor, I know." After pausing a moment, as if vexed at the candour he had exhibited, he said—"Well, doctor, it's all very fine, but dcn't you see, this is gammon; the stuff's safe enough where it is, so you needn't trouble yourself to mount Red Rose Hill." Swiveleye looked blank. Jack took another draught, assumed an uneasy air, and, curtly bidding the doctor good night, departed. With his lean spindle-shanks stretched out, his feet on the fender, his hands thrust into his pockets, and his chin buried in his chest, the doctor sat and meditated. He recalled every syllable that had escaped young Golightly; the plan was too well-laid, too circumstantial in its details, to have been the invention of

the moment, and at length he arose, more convinced than ever by Jack's sudden attempt to demolish it, that he was on the right scent. With a bitter feeling of annoyance that Golightly should have tried at last to throw him off again, he left the ale unfinished, and bent his stealthy steps towards the terrace. A gentle tap at No. 4 brought Cinderow to the door. The doctor was soon engaged in close confab with the officer. The story was quickly told, and as rapidly noted by the cunning official. His little eyes glistened with a sinister expression of delight; he forgave Swiveleye the past, made every excuse for his duplicity on the night of the run, rejoiced in his adroitness in getting out the facts, and his promptitude in conveying the information to himself. "I shall have it, at last," said he, rubbing his bony hands, and took his measures accordingly.

The doctor, having bargained for a fair share of the reward, slunk home, chuckling with delight. He little dreamt that the twinkling eye of Golightly was rivetted upon him, as he crept away from the terrace. Why should Jack have gloated, with such satisfaction, on so drivelling an object as the contemptible figure of the doctor stealing along by his hiding-place; knowing, as he did, that Cinderow was the only man they had reason to fear? But so it was, as though the young imp rejoiced in accumulating difficulties for the mere excitement and pleasure of surmounting them.

force the door, when the undertaker again interposed, observing—"Well, Sir, if you must see inside, don't damage the hearse, Sir, unless you make good repairs, but I prefer opening it;" upon which, drawing forth a key, he unlocked the door, and Cinderow peering into the long recess, observed two bundles at ~~the top~~, and forcing himself two-thirds of the way in, began to pull and haul at them.

At this moment two of the men of mourning suddenly sprang forward, and doubling up his legs, they thrust Cinderow into the hearse, and shut him up. He heard the lock spring to before he could apply his foot to the panel, and found himself a prisoner in that narrow chamber of death. The toll having been instantly paid, the cavalcade proceeded *en route* at a rapid pace; kicking, struggling, and shouting were unavailing in pent up proximity to the rumble of the vehicles and the clatter of hoofs. Cinderow at length resigned himself to his uncertain fate, indulging in such mortifying reflections as his position and circumstances were naturally calculated to inspire. At length the hearse, accompanied by two or three men, diverged from the main road, and drew up opposite a solitary labourer's cottage. The door of this novel prison-house was opened, and its unresisting inmate, overpowered by numbers, was carried over the fence and into the cottage by the back-door. His captors gagged him with the poker, tied him in a chair, and having planted him in the middle of the kitchen, politely wished him good-day, rejoined the coaches in the high road and slowly returned home. There was no alternative for Mr. Cinderow but to bear his unexpected durance, until the innocent occupants of the cottage should return from their labour; which, from the common practice of carrying their dinner with them, would probably not be until nightfall. But the most galling



The capture.

reflection which suggested itself to Cinderow's mind, was the true solution of the whole mystery. Whilst he was led astray by his own cupidity, and what he unjustly believed to be the treachery of Swiveleye, to waylay the mock funeral, the contraband goods had been borne off in undisturbed security by a cross-country road, and, in all probability, placed beyond his reach for ever. The avarice of some men knows no bounds. He had just learned one lesson at the Oldburgh Cliffs, which ought to have shown him the folly of attempting to contend single-handed with a band of smugglers; but still he had resolved, on the information of old Swiveleye, to make the prize all his own; and bitterly did he repent that, in his sordid desire to monopolize the whole fruits of the seizure, he had not availed himself of that help, which it was alike his real interest and his duty to have sought on such an occasion.

The long delayed arrival of the cottagers gave him ample time to indulge in these bitter reflections, to which he may be safely left for the present.

CHAPTER XXII.

"In vain we heave for breath, in vain we cry ;
The nerves, unbraced, their usual strength deny,
And on the tongue their falt'ring accents die."

DRYDEN; VIRGIL.

"It is an epilogue or discourse, to make plain
Some obscure precedence that hath been 'tofore said."

SHAKSPEARE.

WHILST the ingenious device by which Cinderow had been diverted from the contemplated seizure, was being carried into operation, Wakeful was not asleep. To him, as we have seen, was confided the task of removing from Smith's hovel the packages which had been deposited there. For this purpose, reassuming his waggoner's attire, he proceeded with a cart in broad day-light, loaded all the packages but two, and drove leisurely along the street. Sometimes chewing a bit of straw, at others playing with the cord of his whip, then again, lazily humming a stave of some familiar ballad, he looked the unconcerned picture of stolid innocence and rustic stupidity. No one would for a moment have suspected that he was the chosen instrument of a gang of keen smugglers, or that the mercantile-looking packages in that cart contained smuggled commodities. Thus he sauntered along, at a modest distance from his load, until he came to Mr. Roughton's, where he quietly unloaded a package, deposited it in the shop, passed on as

far as Pitt's yard, where he left another, and then proceeded with the remainder in the direction of Mundy's premises. Having reached the street, he scanned the length of it by a furtive glance under his slouched hat, and observing some one whose presence he did not altogether like, he drove straight on, exchanged a side glance, unobserved by any one else, with Mundy as he passed, making no stop until he reached the market-place. Here he boldly halted opposite to one of the most respectable shops in the town, and, having entered, made some trifling purchase, during which, looking across the square, he saw the man, whose presence he had shrunk from, disappear through a thoroughfare at the corner. This man—a creature of Cinderow's—seeing the cart stop at Mr. Merevale's, was satisfied, and had departed, whereupon Wakeful deliberately turned his horse's head, retraced his steps, and deposited his load at Mundy's, where the packages were speedily housed in safety. The two cases left at Roughton's shop and Pitt's yard, were to lie there for a favourable opportunity to dispose of them; and it only now remained for Wakeful to get away the two remaining packages from Smith's hovel, where it was scarcely prudent to keep them longer.

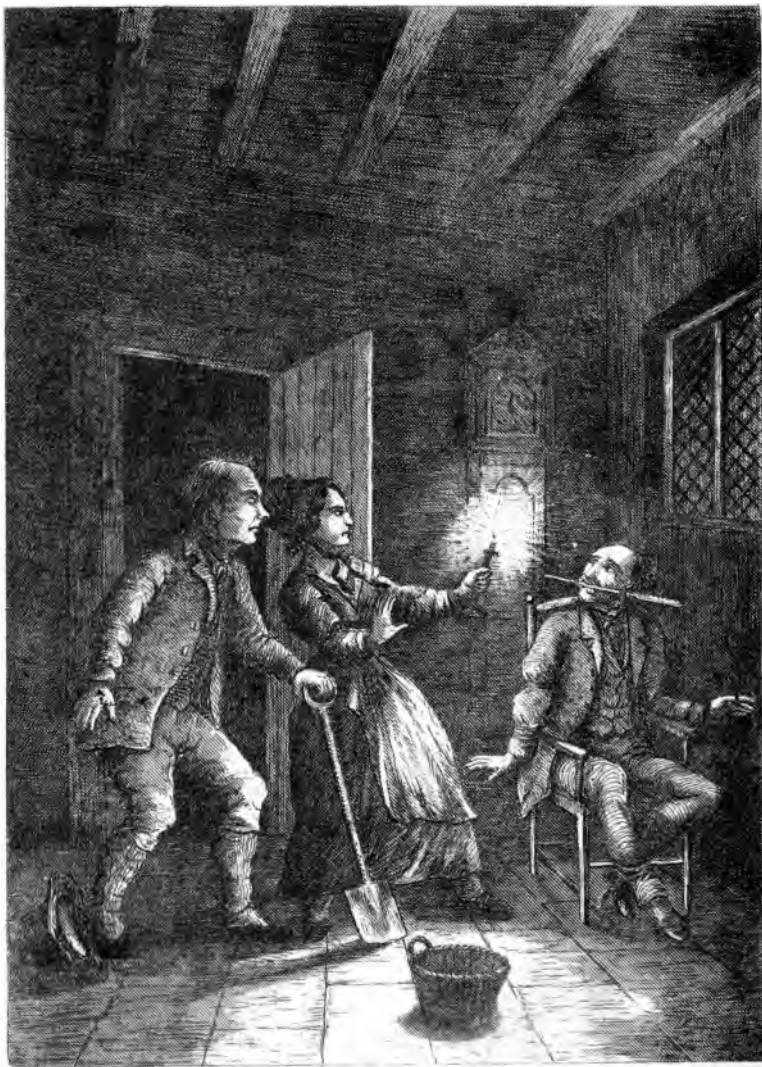
Leaving Wakeful to concoct his plans for this purpose, we may now resume the narrative of Cinderow's misadventure.

The return of the humble cottagers at about half-past five in the evening, was hailed with delight by poor Cinderow, whose limbs and jaws ached from the pressure of the cords, the heavy iron gag, and the long endurance of a posture, which had been little eased by his writhings and vain attempts to rid himself of the thongs that bound him. It was dark when the old man and his wife turned the key of the door and groped their way into the kitchen.

“ Dame, strike a light,” said the labourer, who stood

with his back towards the door resting his hand upon his spade.

The good woman having ignited a match, lighted a small candle, whose flickering rays, gradually growing into a feeble flame, revealed to the bewildered gaze of the astonished pair the strange and silent occupant of the old arm chair. He sat like a spectre before them. A gleam of delight, to which the gag forbade articulate expression, lit up the countenance of the apparition; but a simultaneous shriek of terror escaped the poor woman, whilst her husband was almost struck dumb with amazement. Gradually realizing the idea that the object before them was real flesh and blood, a droll scene of explanation ensued. Cinderow alone could unravel the mystery of the singular position in which the rustics found him. Ludicrous were the contortions of his face, and the gesticulations he made to induce them to untie the string which secured the poker between his aching jaws; and laughable enough were the babbling sounds and broken words he uttered: "Ut-u'tie u'tie 'e-'e po-o-o'er," ejaculated Cinderow, nodding his head, and shaking the heavy gag as a dog would shake a reptile. The peasant cautiously approached him and untied the string, whilst his goodwife, maintaining a respectful distance, held out the candle at arm's length. Restored to the power of fluent speech, so much of the story of the tantalized officer's misfortunes as he deemed it prudent to communicate, was speedily told, and he took his departure homewards, tortured with such feelings of shame and chagrin that he felt almost glad that darkness shrouded him from observation. The next morning he met Swiveleye in the street, and spurned him like a dog.



L. 148

The spectre.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"He answers with a very graceful bow,
As if born for the ministerial trade.
Though modest, on his unembarrassed brow
Nature had written 'gentleman.' He said
Little, but to the purpose, and his manner
Flung hovering graces o'er him like a banner."—BYRON.

"With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which gave
A smart and sharper-looking sort of grace
To his whole aspect, which, though rather grave,
Was by no means as ugly as his case."—BYRON.

THE reader must now be introduced to another personage, of a character widely differing from that of some others with whom he has been already made familiar. This individual was the respected collector of Her Majesty's customs at the port. In height he was rather below the middle stature, tolerably broad-set, keenly intelligent, rather reserved in manners, but most gentlemanlike in deportment, and not the less commanding in appearance from the snowy whiteness of his hair. His age was verging closely upon threescore and ten years. He was scrupulously neat in dress, generally costumed in blue coat and gilt buttons, temporarily exchanged at this period for a suit of mourning, whilst he still adhered to the old-fashioned white neckcloth. He insured respect from all who approached him, both by his venerable appearance and aristocratic bearing. In the society of his friends, in the bosom of his family, and particularly during the cheerful

hour which usually succeeds dinner, he was one of the liveliest of men; and he possessed a fund of anecdote and wit that rendered his company most gratifying and delightful. There was an irresistible fund of humour and drollery about the good old collector; the expression of his countenance, when relaxed into a smile, was almost infectious; and, though the contour of his face was really handsome, his profile on these occasions was so singularly like the conventional portraits of our old Charivari friend *Punch*, that those who were on terms of sufficient intimacy with him to venture on a personal joke, not unfrequently designated him by that mirth-inspiring name, to which, if we adhere, we shall not be far from right. But it is in his sterner and more official character that we must first introduce Mr. Punch to our readers. He had just passed through the rather gloomy gateway of the old grey-stone custom-house, and ascended the stairs leading into his office, when Mr. B. Politeful, his chief clerk, announced to him that a person wished to have a private interview.

"Who is it?" was the curt rejoinder.

Mr. B. Politeful bowed and hesitated, as was his custom, but could not give a name to the candidate for introduction.

"Well, if you don't know, why don't you say so? show him in."

Divested of his top-coat, and installed behind his desk, the collector waited the entrance of the stranger, who presently made his appearance, and rather a suspicious appearance he had. Costumed in black that looked much the worse for wear, with a small exhibition of linen decidedly guiltless of soap and water, his externals were not very inviting, while his pale and haggard countenance was equally forbidding.

The collector coolly eyed him from head to foot, and listened expectingly for what he had to say. The stranger

evidently waited for the collector to speak, and the latter, a little puzzled to know whether the man's eyes were turned to him or not, for they looked two ways at once, impatiently observed—"If you've anything to say to me, say it at once; my time's too precious to be wasted."

The cadaverous mortal made an effort to speak, and at length muttered confusedly that he had a little information to give.

"Well," said Mr. Punch, "in the first place, who are you?"

"I'm the owner of the *Phæbus*, Sir."

"You the owner of the *Phæbus*? what's her tonnage?"

"Seventy tons, Sir."

"Seventy tons! Did you steal her, then, or otherwise?"

The poor fellow looked uncomfortable, and wished himself safe out again, for Mr. Punch was a style of man he had been little accustomed to.

"Well, what's your name?"

"Swiveleye," replied the man.

"Swiveleye," repeated the collector as he rose and rang the bell; "and what have you to say? Are you going to inform against your own vessel or otherwise?"

At this moment Mr. B. Politeful entered bowing and scraping as usual—"Yes, Sir—did you ring, Sir?—I've brought the books, Sir."

"Then take 'em back again, I'm not ready for them yet,—here, wait. Bring me the register of the *Phæbus*."

"Yes, Sir, yes, Sir," said Mr. B. Politeful as he bowed himself out of the room.

"Well," resumed the collector, "go on with your story," and taking up his pen, he made notes of Swiveleye's narrative, in which he disclosed as much as he thought he safely could to keep himself clear, making Mr. Roughton the chief object of his guarded information, and coupling

him as far as possible with the recent seizures, without inculpating himself; at the same time throwing out some hints, not the most favourable, with respect to Cinderow, and begging that his name might not transpire.

"A pretty fellow you are," said Mr. Punch, "the owner of the importing ship, and a party to the whole transaction. I suppose you are aware that I can prosecute you as well as the rest of your gang? You want to save yourself at their expense, eh?"

"I suppose I'm entitled to my share in the reward, Sir?"

"We shall see about that, keep your own tongue still—here, stop a bit—sign this—I'll read it over first." Then, reading aloud the deposition, he handed him the pen. "Is that all true?" asked Mr. Punch.

"It is, Sir."

"Then sign it."

Swiveleye with a trembling hand affixed his signature, and Mr. Punch, taking the pen by the top feather, threw it into the fire, just as Mr. B. Politeful re-entered with the register. The collector glanced it through, and then said—

"Who found the money for this ship?"

Swiveleye faintly ejaculated—"I did, Sir."

"That's a lie," replied Mr. Punch. "You may go now, and don't come again till I send for you, unless you've something more to communicate;" and Mr. Swiveleye withdrew from his interrogator's presence in a frame of mind not the happiest in the world.

"A precious vagabond that," said the collector musingly as the door closed on the retiring informer.

"Yes, Sir, yes, Sir," echoed Mr. Politeful with three or four obsequious bobs, as he laid the routine books before Mr. Punch. These being audited, and Mr. Politeful having in turn retired, the collector sat down and prepared his report to Her Majesty's Commissioners of Customs in



The Poor.

P.152

London, and then instructed a confidential officer to keep his eyes open in certain quarters, although from Cinderow's share in the transaction, it was necessary to communicate to some extent with him also.

CHAPTER XXIV.

“ Fool and blind,
Still credulous I heard, and still pursued
The airy meteor glittering thro' the mire,
Thro' brake and bog, till more and more ingulf'd
In the deceitful quag, floundering I lay.”—DODD.

LITTLE did Mr. Roughton dream that treachery, of which he was the object, was at work, or he would have felt ill at ease, with a witness against him within his own walls; indeed as it was, he did not much relish the idea of keeping on his premises the package which Wakeful had deposited there. His confidence, however, rose, as he reflected on the overtures made to him by Cinderow; and, anxious to cultivate that connection as a cloak for himself, as well as a safe means of prosecuting his new avocation of a smuggler, he resolved upon a bold throw upon his own account. His recent success had intoxicated his giddy brain; he grew more and more hardened every day; the narrow escape he had had on the night of his first adventure had lost its influence over his mind. He determined to lose no time in securing Cinderow's countenance and advice, and therefore betook himself at once to the terrace; boldly announcing his design to bribe a crew and freight a ship, if Cinderow would make all arrangements to secure the prize, and divide the reward with him. Cinderow entered with avidity into the nefarious scheme, and gave him the benefit of his official experience. “Take care,” said he, “to procure a worthless old boat,” a captain you can rely on, and a crew of lads. If I

seize her afloat, and all concerned—that is, the crew—the reward is greater. We shall get half what the ship sells for; the boys are sure to get off—they never prosecute young lads—and, as for the captain, why, he'll be liable to a penalty of £100; and if there's plenty of tobacco, the reward will leave margin enough for that, and a good surplus for us; that's a sure game, and no mistake." Roughton and Cinderow parted sworn friends. The former, all eagerness, lost not a moment in communicating with Marsloops, and arranging for the meditated venture. He soon had the satisfaction of knowing that his ship was ploughing through the channel on her lawless errand; but the same evening brought him news of a more disheartening character—news which made him tremble every time his thoughts turned to the miserable package; which so long as it lay within the precincts of his domicile, haunted his imagination, and excited a thousand guilty fears, robbing him of rest and peace of mind. It rose before his troubled eyes, like a vision of ill omen, in his sleep; at one time standing like a mocking witness against him; at others, floating over him as if threatening to descend on his devoted head; and again, poising on his chest, oppressed him with its weight, like a horrid nightmare from which he seemed to struggle vainly to escape. Writhing under the leaden incubus, he would wake with a fearful start; and gazing into the dark obscurity, search with eager eye for the object of his alarm, until slowly recovering his scattered senses, he realized the conviction that it was all a dream, and sought to dispel the demon fear from his disturbed imagination. Yet, even daylight could not altogether disarm him of the terrors which seemed inseparable from the close companionship of that great square box, though carefully stowed away in an obscure chamber communicating with the shop. He could not pass the entrance

to that gloomy recess without casting furtive glances into its dim obscurity; as if he fancied the package would take to itself legs, and stalk like a phantom into open daylight; and involuntarily he always connected with these strange vagaries the absorbing idea of the presence of police, and of preventive and detective officers. He resolved to get rid of the hideous box, or to find some means of destroying it, valuable as were the contents, and great as had been the trouble wasted on its acquisition. At times, indeed, he felt half-inclined to renounce his new vocation, with all its flattering prospects of speedy affluence; but whenever they rose before his mind he faltered in his purpose, and his better resolutions succumbed to these gilded visions of wealth. The spirit of the gambler had taken possession of his soul. The occasionally-recurring qualms of conscience, repulsed and suppressed as they arose, grew fainter and fewer with every struggle. His evil genius got the mastery, until reckless desperation banished every suggestion of good; but still he could not endure the retention of that bugbear of an unopened box, whose contents so ill accorded with the furniture of a chemist's shop, although indorsed with the flimsy talisman of deceit—"Drugs, with care." He therefore started off in search of Wakeful, on whose ingenuity he relied to get it away with the same skill that he had exhibited in bringing it.

Mr. Roughton had not long started on this errand before a prescription was presented to Sandys, with instructions to prepare it immediately, as the patient was very ill, and the case brooked no delay.

"I'll send it up directly," said the diligent apprentice, and the messenger departed; but, on turning to the little phalanx of bottles arranged on the shelf behind him, Sandys discovered that the most important ingredient was wanting, whereupon he flew with all haste to Mrs. Roughton, carry-

ing the exhausted bottle in his hand ; and, having explained the urgency of the case, suggested whether, as Mr. Roughton was gone out, she would not have the chest in the back shop opened.

"By all means," replied Jane; and, putting her head through the window, she called Pat Murphy from his knifeboard to come and help Sandys to take off the lid. Pat obeyed with alacrity. Without loss of time the box was dragged to the light, the hammer and chisel were applied with hearty goodwill, and, as the lid sprang up, in came Mr. Roughton, trembling with anxiety, and pale as death. His eye fell upon the guilty chest and the two innocent operators.

"It's afther smelling uncommon strong," facetiously observed Pat, scarcely conscious of his master's arrival, but of which he became suddenly aware by the rapid whirl of Roughton's stick, as it descended on poor Sandys' shoulders, whilst his left hand grappled the astonished Pat by the throat.

"Villains!" cried Roughton, "what the devil are you doing? Avaunt! or I'll break your heads."

The sharp cry which had escaped poor Sandys had called Mrs. Roughton into the shop, and supposing that the fearful anger depicted in Harry's countenance had fallen on the two faithful servants in consequence of her orders, timid woman as she was, she immediately exclaimed—"Harry, Harry, dear! I told them to open it."

"You told them to open it, you! Curse your woman's curiosity!" he vociferated; "I'll teach you to meddle in my affairs;" and in his ungovernable rage he raised his hand. She drew back in terror towards the window, and his eye following in the same direction, fell upon those of a stranger gazing through the window. His arm dropt, his cheek grew livid, and with a trembling hand he beckoned

Jane towards the sitting-room, to which she retreated, and fainted on the floor. "What a fool I am," muttered the disconcerted man, as the folly of his hot-brained passion rose forcibly to his mind. "To the stable, Pat," said he, in a commanding but softened tone, "and wait till I come to you. To your work, Sandys," added he; "I'll explain to you directly;" and then, with a desperate effort, he forced the innocently-offending chest back into the recess, and ran to the street door.

"Away with that stuff directly," whispered the rogue whom he had seen gazing through the window, "or the harpies will be on you; they are at Pitt's."

This was Golightly; but before Roughton could reply he had disappeared, and with him the last chance that offered of obeying the hurried injunction; for Wakeful was not forthcoming.

Roughton hastened to the stable, and in passing through the sitting-room found his wife raised into a chair, and Pat, with all the tenderness of a woman, bathing her temples with his brawny hands—"Why didn't you call Mary?" said he, as he took the basin from Pat's hand.

"I'm afther thinkin'," replied Pat, "that too many eyes have been on this job a'ready, and by good luck Mary was busy in the washhouse."

Roughton shuddered at the shrewd inuendo, and patronizingly repeating his wish that Pat should retire to the stable and wait for him, he applied himself to the restoration of his fainting wife. She slowly returned to consciousness. He assisted her to her room. By this time Sandys had again realized the idea that he was in a hurry to procure the indispensable drug, and, notwithstanding the inexplicable treatment he had met with, he, from a sense of duty, sought his master. Roughton came down stairs at the lad's call, and said—"Sandys, my lad, I'm sorry I

was so hasty; run off to Mr. Somerfield's, get what you want from him, and send off the medicine as quickly as possible."

Away flew Sandys.

"Pat," said Harry, on entering the stable, "do you know what was in that box?"

Pat, with a knowing look, replied—"How is it that I should, masther, seeing that ye took such good care I shouldn't?"

Pat's manner was evasive, and the expression he had used in the sitting-room satisfied Harry that his secret was no longer safe, unless he could secure Pat's co-operation, and that no time was to be lost.

"Now, Pat," said he, "d'ye think you could get that box fairly out of my way anyhow, and without loss of time?"

Pat looked puzzled, and after turning and twisting his little black eyes about in all directions, as if searching for an idea, he exclaimed—"Troth, masther, an' it's not much I like daling with things o' that natur', but maybe I'd run a little risk for the sake o' yer honor, barrin' the t'rottler ye gave me; and the poor missis, bless her heart, she takes on so; an' a bether lady never walk'd than she, an' yer honor knows it."

Harry winced at Pat's homespun honesty, but impatiently replied—"Whilst you're talking you might be doing. What do you propose?"

"That's jist it, yer honor. What is it I propose? Perhaps ye'd jist tell me where you want to git it to."

Roughton briefly replied—"Mundy's;" and then, remarking that Pat gave a slight start, added, "or anywhere else; the river, if you like, so that I get it off my premises, and quick."

Pat made no reply, but slipping on his jacket, pulled

from amongst some lumber an old truck—"An' if that goes wid it, it's no great loss we'll have," said he to himself, and boldly wheeling it round into the shop, with the help of Sandys he hastily renailed the lid of the chest, put it on the truck, and with apparent unconcern started off up the street, nodding familiarly to here and there a passenger whom he recognized, as if nothing was the matter. The known honesty of poor Pat averted from him all suspicion. At length he reached Mr. Mundy's shop, and observing the flap of the cellar steps wide open, he wheeled his load straight up to it, and throwing the box off with a resolute jerk, left it to find its way down the steep descent without waiting the result. Heedless of a smothered oath, which sounded somewhat like a cry of pain, he deliberately turned his face homeward again, and arrived once more without the slightest interruption at his master's yard. He resumed his duties as if nothing had happened; but in passing his master's shop he had turned his head, to bestow upon him a sort of triumphant glance, which, however, he forbore on seeing that celebrated rat, Cinderow, engaged in a colloquy with his master. "Jist in time," said the cunning little Pat; and he rejoiced in the belief that, at his own risk, he had perhaps saved his kind mistress, whom he cared most for, from some impending trouble.

CHAPTER XXV.

"Presence of mind, and courage in distress,
Are more than armies to procure success."—DRYDEN.

"If you give way,
Or hedge aside from the direct forthright,
Like to an entered tide they all run by,
And leave you hindmost."—SHAKESPEARE.

THE cause of Roughton's sudden alarm, and the consequences which ensued from the fit of excitement it had produced, arose from a rumour, partly founded in fact, that had reached his ears, of the capture of a quantity of smuggled tobacco, and the detention of a man, whom Roughton was satisfied could be no other than Wakeful; but that which most quickened his apprehensions, was the general belief that information had transpired relative to a recent run of tobacco of some magnitude, and the discovery, through some treacherous medium, of the principal parties concerned. "What," thought Harry, "if my name should be one upon the list, and that unexplainable package should be found upon my premises, falsely branded—'Drugs!'"

It appeared that the collector had discovered some clue to the depository of Wakeful's two remaining packages on Smith's premises, and that he had made known his suspicions to two of his officers; Cinderow was one, and Watterson the other. The latter, a stout active man, but rather too corpulent for a racer, had been instructed to watch in the neighbourhood of Smith's house, and Cin-

derow to direct his attention to several other suspected parties. Wakeful having his own reasons for surmising that all was not safe, had already secured one of the packages, and, emboldened by his uninterrupted success, had returned for the other with a handcart—a vehicle as unlikely as any to excite suspicion. He had not only quitted Smith's premises with his load, but had turned the first corner with it, when he saw two men approaching, one of whom he knew in a moment to be an old familiar of Cinderow's, and in the other recognized Cinderow himself. They suddenly halted when they saw him; but, having arranged his plan of operations with the rapidity of thought, he pushed on towards them with impudent indifference, hoping to reach the narrow lane which, by sundry turns and angles, led through the back fields; his first intention being, as the loss of the tobacco seemed inevitable, to scale the high wall which fenced in the lane, and secure his retreat through the adjacent gardens. The two men evidently kept a steady eye upon his movements, but with the covert intention of pouncing upon him as he passed, affected to be conversing carelessly together. Wakeful having gained the desired point, suddenly turned the handcart into the passage, and, twisting it round to throw a temporary obstacle in the way of any pursuers, took to his heels. The officers instantly gave chase, and arrived at the entrance in time to see the fugitive disappear behind the first angle in the walls; a moment sufficed to pull aside the cart and give them passage way, and on they ran. Wakeful felt himself in an awkward predicament, for, as he proceeded he heard voices ahead; but time did not suffice to ascertain whether they were beyond the next turn in the very path he was on, or over the wall, in either of which cases, if he ran or leapt as a fugitive into the midst of them, his escape would have been impossible. But his ready



P.163.

The rustic's ruse.

tact never failed him. In less time than it has taken to state this dilemma and his passing thoughts, he had knocked in the crown of his hat, pulled his shock of hair over his forehead, taken off his coat and thrown it over his arm, tucked up his trousers to his knees, and, reversing his steps, reeled back with a staggering gait towards his pursuers. As they came breathlessly round the corner, they met the stupid, lubberly, drunken-looking rascal full in the face, with his tongue half out of his mouth, his blinking eyes peering vacantly at the top of the wall, and, to all appearance regardless of their approach, muttering inarticulately to himself—"Niver see sich a thing (hiccup), niver (hic) in my life!"

"Hallo, old fellow," said Cinderow; "have you seen a ~~man~~ running this way?"

With a stolid look Wakeful replied—"Niver see sich a bloo' fool in a' my life!"

"Confound you," retorted the officer, "has any body run this way?"

"Ov'r there (hic), ov'r there," pointing helplessly at the top of the wall; "niver see sich a jump (hic) in a' ~~my~~ life!"

The officers conferred a moment, whilst the rubicund Watterson wiped the perspiration from his bald ~~pate~~, and then helped each other on to the wall, whilst Wakeful staggered and fell upon his face muttering to himself, whereat the officers laughed; and before he had time to rise they had both disappeared on the other side of the wall, a drop-leap of some nine or ten feet, and were off across the gardens, in full cry after some poor fellow whom they had descried in the distance, clambering over a gate into the bridle road beyond. As the officers toiled through the heavy wet soil, making sure of their ~~man~~, they indulged in sundry jokes at the expense, as they thought, of the

drunken fool they had encountered in the lane, when suddenly Watterson halted, and turning as red as a turkey-cock, sagely observed—"We're wrong, we mayn't catch this fellow after all, and we can't identify him; we had better turn back and secure the handcart and package."

"Oh!" replied the other, "I noticed the miserable scamp as he came up the street, and trust me for knowing him if ever I set eyes on him again." Little did he dream of the metamorphosis which had so cleverly given the lie to his boasted powers of identification; but the ground was heavy, and their physical energies had already been severely taxed; so, after another brief debate, they retraced their steps to the formidable wall, which, however, they did not find quite so easy to reascend. After searching some time for a more accessible point, they at length succeeded in regaining the lane, little doubting that their booty would be found where they left it; but on turning the selfsame angle in the wall where they met their drunken informant, they saw their way clear before them and no cart to obstruct their path. In vain did they quicken their pace; for no sooner had Wakeful assured himself of the safe retreat of his enemies, than he was off like a shot from a nine-pounder, and shaking down what had lately worn the semblance of clumsy knee-breeches over dirty white stockings and laced boots, and throwing his coat on his load, he trudged away with a will, and got it safe housed long before his late pursuers had time to regain the street. Wakeful made the best of his way to Mr. Pitt, to report progress and caution him to get rid of his remaining package. In an instant Pitt was on the alert. Wakeful must venture again, but to repeat the visit to Mundy's was not to be thought of, so Wakeful was despatched with his new load, to a shoemaker's shop, where Pitt still carried on business, and which was kept by a trusty old female

servant. But luck was not so much in Wakeful's favour this time, for scarcely had he trudged two hundred yards before his two recent pursuers reappeared at the end of the street, and Wakeful had no alternative but to sacrifice his load, and run for his liberty. No friendly house or convenient passage here presented itself, and fearing lest he should be recognized after his hairbreadth escapes, he sought safety in flight and concealment.

"Got it at last," cried the officers, as they seized upon the deserted prey; "that fellow must have found some readier road out of those confounded gardens than we did; but you see it wasn't for either Mr. Pitt or old Mundy, after all, for he was going in a contrary direction." Rejoicing in their great success they made the best of their way to the custom-house; and hence the story of the large seizure, cart and all, and the reason why Wakeful was not at Roughton's service in time of need.

Mr. Cinderow presented himself at Roughton's house; the latter received him with all the ease of a man who had just got a heavy burden off his mind; and, on being told his errand, actually invited a search with all the confidence of conscious innocence. That search was slight; Cinderow, politely considering the feelings of Mrs. Roughton, confined his examination to the purlieus of the shop and business premises, then just walked into the sitting-room, chatted with Mrs. Roughton, took a glass of wine, shook hands, and retired with as much urbanity as if the new acquaintance with Mr. Roughton were a friendship of long standing. When that worthy had turned his back on Mr. Roughton's house, the latter hurried to the stable-yard to make all right, as he termed it, with Pat Murphy. "Just in time and well done, Pat," said Roughton, as he confronted the brisk little Irishman; "there's a sovereign for you."

Pat, with an offended air, replied—"Devil a bit; Pat

Murphy fingers no gold for the likes o' that, begging your honour's pardon."

Much as he admired the blunt honesty of poor Pat, Mr. Roughton could not conceal his annoyance. He strove in vain to prevail on Pat to take the proffered bribe; but balked in this, he said—"Well, Pat, I suppose I can trust you to keep your tongue still."

Pat's eye flashed with honest indignation, as he answered—"I thought yer honour had known Pat Murphy too well to suspect him of threachery; but it's a diract lie I'll tell for nobody, though maybe I'd bother a question or two if they're oncivilly put me."

With this assurance Roughton felt somewhat relieved; his confidence in Pat's shrewd wit was unbounded, and he quitted him more at ease. Half an hour had probably elapsed after this interview, when Pat again presented himself before his master, and, after twirling his hat round once or twice in his fingers, he said—"Sir, I've been thinkin', worst come to the worst, I may some day be axed some ugly questions about this job."

"What do you mean by that?" retorted Roughton, with rather a puzzled look.

"Well now that's jist an ugly question, and maybe it's as well I'd not answer," replied Pat dryly; "but I'd jist remind yer honour of that great hape o' waste paper in the back room there, and I wouldn't wonther if Masther Mundy mightn't turn it to some account."

"Well?" replied Roughton expectingly.

"Well, by yer honour's lave, there's a great box in the same place, an' I'd like just to fill it and make another trip, by the same rule, to Masther Mundy's."

"If that will afford you any satisfaction, Pat, you may do it," said Roughton, and as Pat still stood immovable, he added—"And what next, Pat?"

"Well, by the same rule, yer honour, I wouldn't object to dhrink yer honour's health for that same."

Harry threw him a crown piece, with a caution not to oil his tongue with it all at one time.

"Thrust me for that," said Pat, and away he went to perform his eccentric commission. Pat turned back as he reached the door, and, with a cunning leer, observed—"I suspect there were a few laves in that other chest, yer honour?"

There was no need for further concealment with honest Pat; and Harry replied—"Right enough, Pat, there were a few leaves in it." And Pat, with a knowing wink, closed the door after him.

"Masther Sandys," said he, as he bundled up the paper, "it's the masther wants to be rid of this, jist lend a hand to weigh it, and make out a little bill at fourpence a pound, to the 'bacconist, Misther Mundy, if you plase." The box and the bill complete, Pat bowled away with his load, and deposited it, to the surprise and apprehension of Mr. Mundy, in that worthy gentleman's shop. "There's the bill, Sir," said Pat, "an' all right; never mind the tin; masther can thrust yer honour," and, with a significant nod, he left him to ponder over the unexpected consignment.

Mundy hobbled after him to the door to call him back, but Pat was not anxious to enter into a discussion, or continue longer than necessary in that locality, so, touching his hat, as he glanced at a red handkerchief bound round Mr. Mundy's shin, he said—"Sorry to see yer honour lame, nothin' serious I hope; ye'll find the contints of the box to yer satisfacshin," and, regardless of Mundy's rejoinder, he bid him good-by, and hurried away.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"The secret enemy, whose sleepless eye
Stands sentinel, accuser, judge, and spy,
The foe, the fool, the jealous, and the vain,
The envious who but breathe in others' pain.

• • • •

To find in hope but the renewed caress,
The serpent-fold of further faithlessness,—
If such may be the ills which men assail,
What marvel if at last the mightiest fail?"—BYRON.

THE in-and-out transactions, mixed up and narrated bit by bit as events jostled against each other, were quietly over, with the loss of only a solitary package, always excepting the twenty bales of tobacco offered up to the Moloch of Cinderow's cupidity, part of the proceeds of which, by honourable compact between him and Swiveleye, was to come into hotchpot on the final settlement of accounts between Roughton, Pitt, and their worthy accomplices. The run was, upon the whole, cleverly and successfully accomplished, and the large profits were all the sweeter for the difficulties and dangers overcome.

It was uncertain when Cinderow's contribution would be forthcoming, but the parties met in high spirits; and after exchanging congratulations as earnest as those of the two great generals, Wellington and Blucher, after the battle of Waterloo, they squared accounts, assigning to Swiveleye all that he had stipulated for with Cinderow; and by a joint contribution handed him in cash, as his share, five sovereigns, an arrangement in which, to their surprise, not

unmingled with distrust, the needy doctor acquiesced without a murmur, whilst he accepted the five pounds with expressions of gratitude.

The serenity of the next few days was grateful even to the feelings of these restless individuals, and they rejoiced in their ill-gotten gains with peculiar satisfaction. Mr. Roughton received the agreeable intelligence that his new venture, all his own and Cinderow's, was almost within his reach, and the latter was apprised that no one might forestall the golden prize.

In the meantime Her Majesty's representative of the customs had received a somewhat formidable missive from London, in the shape of a writ of *capias*, for the apprehension of Mr. Roughton. As it had reference to the transaction in which Cinderow had figured as the seizing officer of the twenty bales, the warrant was indorsed to him as the proper arresting officer. Mr. Punch had his misgivings; but, considering the position of his officer, he resolved to lose no time in putting the instrument into his hands, with a curt and unmistakable intimation to do his duty. Cinderow was somewhat disconcerted at receiving this unexpected commission, the execution of which must savour of a breach of faith with his new accomplice. He took special care not to exhibit his emotion, for he knew that Mr. Punch was a gentleman not to be trifled with; he therefore took his instructions with well-feigned avidity, resolving all the time to temporize so as to make sure of the coming prize, in which case the diabolical idea that the new seizure might be all his own, when his victim was helpless and in prison, flashed across his mind, and he cherished it with savage delight. Quitting the presence of the collector, he avoided the haunts of Mr. Roughton with scrupulous care, watched him from his own house, and then took the opportunity of stepping in to inquire for him, taking special

precautions to be seen in his pretended search, though giving himself more trouble to avoid his man than he would, in ordinary cases, have taken to secure him ; but the very next morning he unexpectedly met Mr. Roughton full in the face on the public quay. They were not the only persons there—the situation was a difficult one. The expected ship was not in the roads, and the winds were contrary. Should he speak to him ? He feared that other eyes would be drawn to him. Should he hint to him the danger that was impending ? That would only compromise himself, and self was his idol. He turned and walked away. As he approached the custom-house, Mr. Watterson accosted him with the startling observation—"Roughton's on the pier." He was taken aback for the moment, and then, with his usual tact, said—"I can find him when I want him," and passed on. Three hours later he was summoned into the collector's room. His fears suggested half a dozen difficulties, but he relied on his own ingenuity to get over them.

"Mr. Cinderow," said the collector, with a firm and studied courtesy, "I don't ask you whether you have arrested Roughton or otherwise ; but if he is not in your custody in an hour's time, return me that warrant." Cinderow was about to reply. "Do as I tell you, or some one else shall."

"Yes, Sir ; but—"

"Yes, Sir ; but ! Don't yes and but me. Go and do your duty, or otherwise—"

"I beg your pardon, Sir ; I'll go."

The collector cut him short with a withering frown—"Go to —." Cinderow bowed, and backed out without waiting for another word ; and the collector rang his bell—"Send Mr. Watterson to me," said he to the messenger, "directly, d'ye hear ?" Mr. Watterson appeared.

"Cinderow is just gone by my orders to arrest Roughton; follow him, and report to me what you see."

Mr. Watterson obeyed. Cinderow proceeded moodily towards Roughton's house; as he approached the shop he looked stealthily up and down the street, and beheld Watterson passing quietly along the opposite side. Roughton was in his shop; there was no alternative. Cinderow entered with an uncertain step and uneasy expression. "Mr. Roughton," said he, "I am very sorry, but there has been some treachery somewhere."

Roughton turned pale—"What do you mean; surely no one else has seized her? She's just arrived below the sand-bank."

Cinderow could not restrain a smile of satisfaction. Selfishness nerved him for his duty, and he said—"No, Mr. Roughton, I'm sorry to say it's not that," but fumbling in his pocket he produced his missive, adding—"I'm grieved to tell you that I have no alternative but to make you my prisoner. I wanted to tell you yesterday, but other eyes were on us."

Roughton was for the moment speechless. At length his anger rose, and setting Cinderow down as the direst villain under the sun, asked, with bitter irony—"It was for the arrival of the *Crown* that you waited? and having got that information I must be sacrificed to your avarice and treachery!" and he raised his clenched fist.

Cinderow drew back a step or two, and producing a pistol and a pair of handcuffs, said—"No nonsense, Mr. Roughton; I'm grieved to have so painful a duty thrust on me, but I must do it."

Roughton recoiled at the sight of those manacles, and resignedly said—"I'll follow you quietly anywhere, Mr. Cinderow, rather than be dragged through the streets like a felon with gyves upon his wrists;" then, reflecting for a

moment, he thought of his wife, of his recent coldness, and frequent brutality; and he felt, in spite of all this, that she would be more grieved and broken-hearted to see him in a gaol than he would himself. All his tenderness for her seemed to roll back into its natural channel, as the conviction came home to him that her ardent love and faithful devotion would be, if possible, tenfold greater for him as a suffering and degraded inmate of a prison, ay, even as a beggar, than in his happiest days. He felt that he had wronged her, and that, if he had listened to her wise counsels, the little sitting-room, from which a frail partition only separated him, would have been his happy retreat for that very night, which he was about to spend in a melancholy cell without her soothing voice to cheer, or the smiles of his little ones to enliven him. "Wretch that I am," said he, and the strong man melted into tears. Even Cinderow stood aloof, and respected that intensity of grief. A brief struggle and the paroxysm was over. With suppressed emotion he asked, in a tone of unnatural calmness—"Am I not entitled to give bail?" He waited with deep anxiety the reply.

"If you can procure good and sufficient bond to appear and take your trial."

"Trial!" The word struck terror into his very soul. "A public spectacle for vulgar eyes to gaze at, and envious neighbours to gloat over!" The loss of the externals of respectability grieved him more as yet than the sin which had involved him in this woeful degradation. "Trial!" he repeated; "cannot I escape that bitter ordeal?"

"By paying the penalties, of course," said Cinderow.

"And what amount?" eagerly inquired the prisoner.

Referring to his documents, Cinderow replied—"Six hundred pounds."

Roughton's mind recurred in a moment to his invest-

ment on the water, now so nearly within his grasp, and to his compact with the man whose hand was on his shoulder. Hasty and passionate, his revengeful spirit suggested that he would not surrender that to the villain who, he believed, had betrayed him. "Six hundred pounds! There's time enough for that. The bail first—the bail, Mr. Cinderow. Will you walk with me to Mr. Pitt's?"

"Oh, certainly, with pleasure," said Cinderow.

Roughton turned to poor Sandys, who had been a silent but trembling and astonished spectator of this unexpected scene, and whispered—"Sandys, not a word of this to any one—not to Mrs. Roughton, above all. If any one inquires for me, I'm gone out for a short time on business;" and, taking Cinderow's arm, the two men marched up the street like bosom friends to all eyes, except those of Mr. Watterson, who still kept them in view, and watched them into Mr. Pitt's.

Pitt's practised eye discovered in a moment that there was mischief in the wind, and mechanically buttoned up his pockets, addressing him at the same time with unusual warmth—"Hallo! my dear fellow, there's nothing wrong, I hope?"

Roughton came to the point at once—"I want bail, and who should I think of coming to but you?"

"Why me?" retorted Pitt, winking knowingly in Roughton's face; "of course I know nothing about it; what's it for? What amount?"

"Six hundred pounds," interposed Cinderow, exchanging an intelligible glance with Pitt, for the sudden thought had crossed his mind that if Roughton escaped his clutches that night the *Crown* might escape him too. His greedy spirit suggested, "that must be all my own, by hook or by crook now."

"Can't do anything of the sort, Mr. Roughton," said

Pitt. "It might compromise me. Better find some other friend," adding, with a whisper in Harry's ear, "some one above all suspicion. You understand me?"

"I don't," retorted Harry.

"Why, you see," said Pitt, "if I go bail for you, that keen old taut-hand of a collector will be sure to think I've some interest in it, and I shall have no peace. Don't you think so, Mr. Cinderow?"

"Mr. Punch is a deep and determined hand, certainly," observed Cinderow; "but it's not for me to interfere, you know, between friends, and perhaps Mr. Roughton may have an opportunity of doing as much *for you*," added he, significantly.

Pitt started,—a glance from Cinderow reassured him; and taking Roughton by the button he drew him towards the window, and endeavoured to cajole him into the belief, that what had escaped Cinderow rendered it the more expedient that he should not interfere—"For," said he, "I fear it will be my turn next. I never give nor ask bail; I always pod down the money on such occasions, and save my credit."

Harry cursed the cold-blooded scoundrel in his heart, and abruptly turning away said, "Mr. Cinderow, follow me," and led the way home. His mind was made up. Arrived there, he counted out £500, a sum which Cinderow had intimated would be accepted if offered in lieu of bail, little thinking that Roughton could find it on the spur of the moment. He, however, tendered it, and demanded his discharge.

"Can't take it," said Cinderow, rather astounded; "you'd better go with me to the collector."

"Very well; away with you," and in half an hour he was discharged, minus £500 of his recently acquired capital. "Now," said he, "that rascal shall find his match," and,

ordering a cab, he drove to the river side, dismissed the vehicle, watched it clear off, then hailed a boat, and pulled away in the direction of the locality where he expected to find the *Crown*. Unfortunately, he had taken the wrong channel, the tide was ebbing fast, the long sand-bank lay between him and the object of his search, and the captain was not within hail. "Back," vociferated Harry to the boatman, "we must double the point of this dirty sand-bank; bring me within hail of that schooner in fifteen minutes and I'll give you a sovereign; I'll lend a hand myself," and, seizing one of the oars, he cried—"Pull away." Vigorously they plied the oars, and after a severe tug they reached the longed-for channel, and, running with the ebb, were presently within a hundred and fifty yards of the schooner. Harry, who had twenty times looked over his shoulder whilst straining at the oar, observed that the canvas was fluttering in the breeze, and the vessel already in motion, floating with the tide. The captain, on the alert, had made him out with his glass, and shrewdly guessing there was mischief brewing, had weighed anchor, making all haste to run out of danger. In the excitement of the moment Harry rose in the boat, gave the captain a hearty cheer, and waving his handkerchief, signalled the captain to hurry seaward. As both boat and schooner were in motion, the little distance between them diminished more gradually, the captain gave a sign of intelligence, and as the sails were filling with a favouring breeze Harry's heart bounded with delight. He strained his eyes with eager satisfaction as she gallantly ran before the wind. "All's right," he ejaculated; but as he uttered the words his eye caught a glimpse of a little galliot shooting athwart the stream, and, to his utter dismay, he descried Cinderow astern, eagerly urging his boatman towards the devoted craft. Harry relinquished the oar, threw himself back in

the boat overcome with fatigue and disappointment, uttered the monosyllable, "Home," and abandoned himself to the bitterest reflections. The waterman lazily pulled round the boat, and slowly regained the stairs from whence they started, pocketed the sovereign which Harry gave him with a sigh, and, mechanically touching his hat, gazed after the melancholy retreating figure, with the deep interest of a man who was evidently no stranger to such emotions himself; and as Harry disappeared, the man uttered with a significant shrug—"He's a poor unhappy—." But the last word died on his lips.

CHAPTER XXVII.

“ For he so crafty was of forge and face,
So light of hand, so nymble of his pace—
So smooth of tongue, and subtile in his tale,
That could deceive one looking in his face.”

SPENCER'S FAERY QUEEN.

“ HARRY! Harry! why do you grieve? I am far happier now than I have ever been. I can bear poverty with your confidence and affection, better than strife with riches. Let us only think how we can best defend ourselves, and look cheerfully to the future, when these troubles shall be over.”

Thus Jane, from whom the facts could be no longer concealed, reasoned with her husband, who, overwhelmed by the miseries he had brought upon himself, was alternately the victim either of deep depression and anguish, or of violent and ungovernable rage. It was poor Jane's unceasing endeavour to assuage his grief or allay his turbulent emotions. She cherished hopes for the future, where all seemed blank to him, and strove to allay that gnawing and remorseful anger which drove him almost to madness, whenever his thoughts turned towards those who had seduced, betrayed, and then deserted him. His animosity towards Cinderow was great, but his wrathful indignation against Pitt knew no bounds, nor did he now seek to conceal it.

Pat Murphy, who, since the affair had got noised abroad,

had received more of his master's confidence than before, was ever on the alert for such information as might be useful or interesting to him.

Rumours were rife of arrests or searches after various parties; and, though Pitt's name was in every one's mouth as *particeps criminis*, no one seemed to expect that he was in any danger of capture.

"Oh, he stands too well with Cinderow," said one.

"He knows how to keep his head above water, let who will sink," said another; whilst a third surmised that when two men are thick enough to wear one another's coats, the one hasn't much to apprehend from the other.

Full of these *on dits*, Pat appeared in the little sitting-room with his budget; and, as he concluded, said—

"Och, thin, don't I know that that thief, Cinderow, called at Pitt's for his big-coat and wrapper the selfsame night as thim divil's tricks was played wid that darlint pony?"

A shade passed over Harry's brow at the mention of the pony, but his thoughts were engrossed with Pat's comments on Mr. Pitt, and he broke out into violent declamations against the scoundrel, mixed with many threats of what he would do little short of killing him.

"Don't, Harry, I implore you; don't lay a hand on that man, for my sake don't. You know how he insulted me, but I forgive him; now pray don't disgrace—"

"Disgrace!" interrupted Harry bitterly; but Pat again interposed—

"Was it your ownself he insulted, ma'am? Is it that ye say now?"

"Never mind," replied Jane as she saw the colour mantle in Pat's cheek, whilst a momentary glare of ferocity lighted up his eye, "I ought not to have mentioned it."

"Never mind!" ejaculated Harry, "but I do mind; and if he comes across me, I'll break his head."

"Well, beggin' yer honour's pardon," said Pat, suddenly assuming a subdued tone of remonstrance; "if I may be so bould as to spake now, I'd advise yer honour not to throuble yerself wid that ruffian. Lave him to God and his conscience and the punishment that's sure to befall him widout yer honour's help."

"That's right, Patrick," ejaculated Jane; "I do hope your master will follow your Christian-like counsel."

"Maybe it's not very Christian, the advice that Pat Murphy's able to give, but leastwise, if his honour 'll condescind to take it, I think he'll find it satisfactory in the long run."

Having thus acquitted himself, Pat retired.

"That's a good gentle creature, though he is so rough," observed Jane.

Harry nodded a sort of equivocal assent, as much as to say—"Believe that, Jane, if it will be any satisfaction to you; but if I know Pat Murphy's disposition at all, I shall hear more about this." Assuming a smile, which belied the feelings of his heart, he rose from the breakfast table to brood over the treachery of Pitt, and devise some method of retaliation.

Nor was Harry Roughton the only one of the desperate clique whose thoughts were occupied with new designs of vengeance—despite the common tie which bound them together, or made them dependant upon each other for their personal safety. Matters had reached the culminating point at which treachery and revenge, spurred on by rankling suspicion, however unjust, inevitably bring the hapless participators in fraud into antagonism with each other.

Whilst Roughton was abstractedly pondering over the topics of the breakfast table, as he commenced with heavy heart his duties behind the counter, a busy throng of officials

and others were gathering under the ancient gateway of the custom-house, and again dispersing right and left to their various avocations. A youth of shabby genteel appearance, furtively watching the motley groups, had taken his stand on the opposite side of the street, where he loitered, until he saw a fussy-looking middle-aged gentleman turn in and ascend the stairs leading towards the collector's office. With a foot as light as a fawn the youth crossed over, and was close upon the heels of the gentleman he was following before his approach was perceived, when he gave a slight cough, which drew that worthy's attention towards him. He turned round, and with a polite bow, which he could not have restrained had he been addressing a mendicant, Mr. B. Politeful inquired what he wanted.

"I beg pardon, Sir; has my father been here?"

"Your father—I don't know you, Sir; who do you mean?"

"Has Mr. Swiveleye been here?"

"What! the owner of the *Phæbus*?"

"Yes, Sir, that's him."

"He hasn't been here since he saw the collector on—" but suddenly recollecting himself, and that Swiveleye's visit was confidential, he stammered out, amidst half a dozen bows—"No, I have not seen him—to-day—" and hurried on leaving his interrogator, who, however, retired evidently satisfied with the result of his inquiries.

Wakeful was sitting moodily over a few smouldering embers in an obscure garret—the confinement of which was not very consonant with his restless, and at that moment, revengeful spirit—when the door opened, and in sprang Jack Golightly.

"All right, Wakeful," said he, "Swiveleye's the villain—I've just heard it from the lips of old Bow-and-Scrape himself.

"The devil you have," muttered Wakeful; "do you think I can safely turn out of this hole?"

"Why not?" replied Golightly, "them two fools have no more idea who you was than the man in the moon—they suspect old Jem."

"Tak' me for old Jem!" exclaimed Wakeful; "why he's old enough for my grandsire, the bullet-headed asses."

"Never mind the compliment, Wakeful," rejoined Jack, "as long as it keeps you clear; change your toggery and turn out. Shall you leather the old thief? I'll back you."

Wakeful made no answer, but donned his countryman's attire and stalked off in his white smock-frock and leather gaiters, wearing close over his eyes a wide-awake contributed by Golightly to the rustic wardrobe. He bent his steps towards the custom-house, and procured an interview with the collector. His story, in which a cadaverous looking man, with a cast in his eye, was described as having played a prominent part, was soon and cleverly told. Shrewd as was Mr. Punch, he, for once, was deceived by the rude simplicity of the man, who appeared before him as the ignorant dupe of a gang of unscrupulous smugglers, who had availed themselves of the poor fellow's aid in carting away and hiding a "heavyish load of biggish bags well nigh ha'f a hundredweight apiece."

Having gratified his vengeful feelings against the traitor to whom he attributed the recent peril from which he had so narrowly escaped, by paying him off in his own coin, he marched out as happily as one scoundrel could feel in the supreme satisfaction of having victimized another. Meeting Golightly in the street, he at once addressed him with the cheering intelligence that his mind was quite easy now, and proposed an adjournment to the "Blue Boar," to drink Swiveleye's good health and a safe lodging to him.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Now justices of the peace must judge all pieces
Of mischief of all kinds, and keep the game
And morals of the country from caprices
Of those who've not a license for the same."—BYRON.

WHEN the estimable Cinderow boarded the *Crown*, he found Marsloops in no very good humour, though three sheets in the wind. His first impulse on seeing the galliot close under the bows of the schooner, was to knock the officer's brains out with a marline-spike the moment he set foot on deck. Second thoughts are sometimes best. It was well for Cinderow that Marsloops, ere too late, arrived at that conclusion. Reflecting on the inconvenience which might accrue to himself from violence with other eyes upon him, he slunk back in sullen mood, threw himself on a cask, and waited with folded arms the approach of his captor.

"It's *you* is it, Master Marsloops," ejaculated Cinderow with an affectation of surprise.

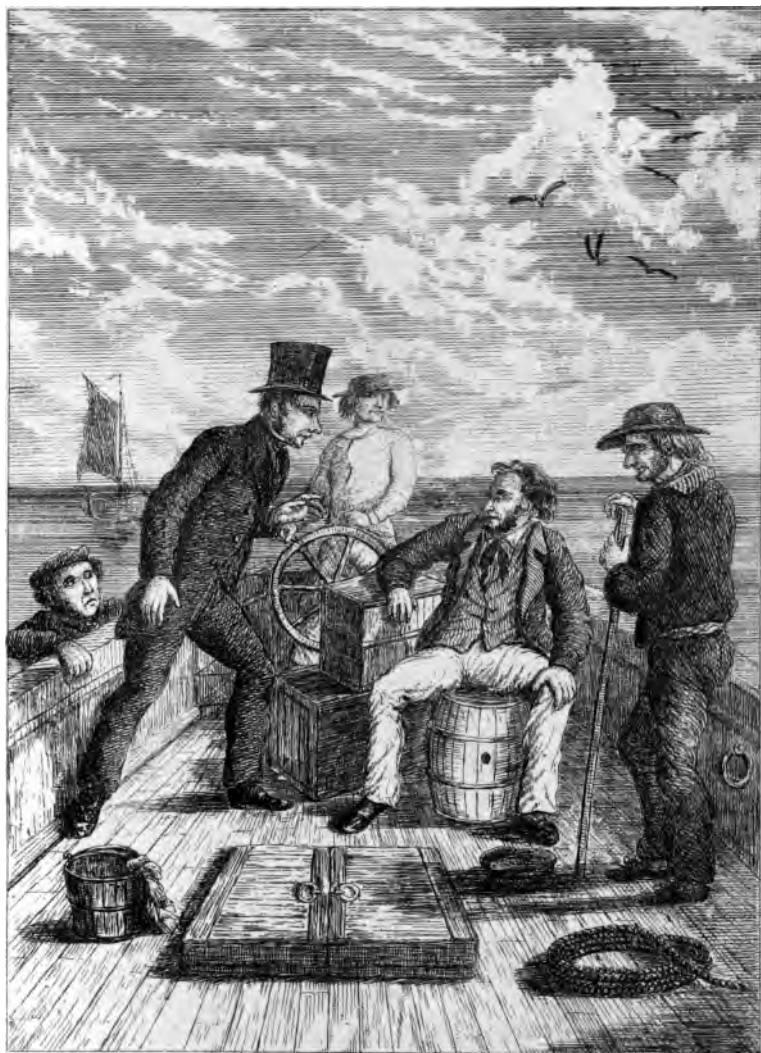
A scowl of unmitigated contempt was the only return.

"Sorry to interfere unpleasantly, captain," continued Cinderow; "but I must do my duty."

"Is it by information?" doggedly asked Marsloops.

"No," replied Cinderow; and leaving his man on deck, he hauled off the hatches and dropped into the hold.

"All right," shouted he, as his head peered above the hatchway, "swing her round; don't be downhearted, old fellow, it's the fate of war you know."



The seizure.

"Fate o' war," growled Marsloops; "if I'd knowed as much as I know now, you wouldn't ha' bin here."

"Why not?" asked Cinderow.

"Why if I'd knowed as ther'd bin nobody but you and your man, Friday, on the cliffs yonder the last time we met, I'd ha' just doubled you up like a sprat and tuck you off to sea as sure as your name's Jimmy."

Cinderow didn't much like the manner of his captive, and kept at a respectful distance till they came alongside the pier, where, plenty of help being at hand in case of need, all his valour returned, and marching Marsloops and his crew along with him, he consigned them to the care of the officers at the station, and proceeded to the custom-house to report proceedings.

The crew consisted of two or three raw lads, but along with them was poor Jones the fisherman, who earned a casual subsistence under Tom Rice, the real owner of the *Crown*, which had been hired for this trip, and who had no concern whatever in the venture, having merely come on board half an hour before to have a stare at the old familiar craft, and refresh acquaintance of some years' standing with Captain Marsloops; but poor Jones being, as Cinderow expressed it, "found on board a ship liable to forfeiture," must share the same fate as the rest.

Marsloops, seated on a locker in the station-house with his elbows on his knees, was so thoroughly absorbed by his own thoughts, and those none of the pleasantest, that he was quite unconscious of all around him; though poor Jones and the youngsters paced to and fro before him, like restless animals in a menagerie, whilst at intervals something like a growl did justice to the simile. An occasional imprecation escaped the compressed lips of the captain, as he now and then threw down his cap upon the boards and mechanically regained it.

1

"How came this mishap?" was the all-engrossing idea of the chagrined sailor. "Why was he such a fool as to listen to the advice of a greenhorn like Roughton, and take up his moorings in the very teeth of danger, instead of running his cargo in a more secluded spot? He's a fool, and I forgive him," muttered he; "but if I make out who peached, I'll—" and he clenched his brawny fist, whilst his eyes flashed fire, and his brow grew dark with savage emotion.

He was disturbed from his meditations by the return of Cinderow, who gruffly summoned Marsloops and his companions to follow him. Presently they found themselves standing in a gloomy apartment, with a green covered table intervening between them and a somewhat austere-looking personage perched on a high chair, in whom they recognized the magistrate upon whose fiat their fate depended. Beneath this more elevated dignitary sat the justice's clerk, and on either side stood two or three blue-coated officers of police, whilst the open space behind was occupied by idle gazers, amongst whom the keen eye of Marsloops descried Roughton, notwithstanding the cloak he was muffled in, and the wrapper that enveloped his mouth and chin.

Plenty of preparation, thought Marsloops, looking round as if the court had been improvised for his especial benefit. The business, however, was sooner over than he expected.

Caught in *flagrante delicto*—the fact was proved against him by Cinderow in a score of words—"Found on board the *Crown* with tobacco in her hold—180 bales on rummage—illegal sized packages."

Marsloops being in due form called on for his defence, said—

"It's all true enough; but this here man," pointing to Jones, "had no more to do wi' the job than the babe

unborn, and Cinderow knows it; an' if he pushes the job agin' him, he'll find it out yet." With these words, and a contemptuous curl of the lip, he turned his back on Cinderow.

The magistrate rebuked the irate captain for attempting to intimidate a respectable officer in the execution of his duty.

A brief turn of the head, a sudden flash of the eye, with a satirical but guttural echo of the word "respectable," was all the notice he took.

The magistrate adjudged him to pay a penalty of £100, committing him to prison until that sum should be paid.

The boys shared the same fate, with a recommendation to the customs' authorities to discharge them by reason of their tender age.

Then came old Jones' turn. Notwithstanding all his protestations of innocence, and his heart-rending appeals to Mr. Cinderow, the latter showed no sign of moderation. Doubtless he thought of the head-money, and he urged the conviction, though he knew the man was innocent, and the justice had no alternative but to adjudge the penalty.

"Please yer honour, I can't pay it; I have a wife and five children, yer honour—have mercy," pleaded the poor fellow.

The justice exhibited some symptoms of compassion, and the old fisherman's eye glistened with a transient gleam of hope. Seizing the favourable moment, he urged the foolish plea—

"Please yer honour, I'm Ralph Jones as sent your honour that fish the other day—do have mercy."

A vision of Sir Matthew Hale and the haunch of venison floated before his worship's eyes, as he replied—

"I have not half-a-crown in my pocket to discharge the obligation, and I can only give you in return a few months' maintenance in prison;" and with this semi-dignified,

quasi-facetious observation, the poor man's hopes were dashed to the ground.

Cinderow marched off in triumph with his captives.

It seldom happens that an officer, whether civil or military, revenue or police, gets a culprit into his clutches without contriving to pump him on his way to his dungeon, particularly if the desponding captive, in the hope of securing better terms for himself, is inclined to impeach an accomplice, or let slip anything which may further the officer's ulterior views.

Cinderow was not the man to let such a chance escape; but Marsloops was not one of such tender mould as to be easily susceptible of cajolery, however subtle. Yet, having a point to gain, he did not "fight shy" of Cinderow's overtures to a conversation *en route*. The design of the one was to learn by indirect means by whom he had been betrayed; and of the other, to ascertain whether, despite Roughton's assurances to the contrary, there were any others over whom he could throw his net.

A hundred questions and observations on both sides failed of their effect. Cinderow studiously evaded all inquiries tending to the discovery of the source of his information, which Marsloops so eagerly desired to learn. One additional inducement to reserve on this point, was the questionable position in which he stood with his real, but now discarded, informer, Mr. Roughton.

To throw Marsloops off the scent, and to sound him as to the possible participation of others, Cinderow threw out a speculative suggestion, pointing to another not improbable quarter.

"Come, cheer up, old fellow, it's only £100; and surely Mundy will come down with the dust, seeing you couldn't help it."

The captain fixed his eye on Cinderow's face, as if he

would read his inmost thoughts; and the latter returned his gaze with an equally inquisitive cunning. Each formed his own conjecture from the tone and looks of the other; but neither of them spoke another word.

"Struck dumb with that hit," thought Cinderow; "sure enough, if there's anything in that blank stare, it means that he thinks I know all."

Marsloops, on the other hand, drew the inference that Mundy, being in with Roughton, and hand and glove with Cinderow, had betrayed both Roughton and himself; whilst the conduct of Roughton, in his vain attempt to ward off the seizure, only confirmed the captain's suspicion, which he fostered in gloomy silence, till his footsteps re-echoed within the gateway of the gaol, where Cinderow consigned him to the care of the turnkey.

Shown into a dimly-lighted cell, he threw himself down upon the bench, and, dreaming only of treason and vengeance, he fell asleep.

When the grey dawn of morning broke through the stanchioned window, Marsloops was sitting moodily on the bench, which had formed his couch of the preceding night, collecting his straggling thoughts, like a man just roused from a fitful dream.

Whilst Marsloops was thus casting off the lethargy of a dull cold sleep, a youth attired in a blue jacket and white ducks, with a jaunty bit of a black handkerchief round the collar of a blue checked shirt, sought an interview with his uncle, *Captain Marsloops*.

The gaoler could not refuse so natural a request, on the condition that he should be present, and the youth was accordingly ushered in.

Up rose the captain, who recognized in his early visitor young Golightly, and, stretching out his brawny hand, exclaimed—

"Hallo, Jack! how goes it?"

"Middling, thank you, *uncle*," replied Jack with a knowing wink, laying peculiar emphasis on the last word, from which Marsloops took his cue, and adopted the new relationship.

"Well, Jack, here I am, thanks to somebody—what's happened while I've been afloat?"

Jack made a sign to the captain to sing slow, as the gaoler was jingling his keys at no great distance.

"All bad," says Jack; "Roughton's been arrested by Cinderow, and the doctor's in quod, I guess, by this time. Wakeful's had a narrow escape, and I think they're after old Jem, but he's wide awake, and Pitt braves it out like a rare 'un, but his place was searched last night.

"Well, an' what about Mundy?" asked Marsloops with eagerness.

"I can't exactly say," replied Jack; "but I twigged him having a bit o' sly jaw with Cinderow last night, as if 'twas all right there."

Marsloops fell into a brown study, regardless of Jack's prattle; and after brooding for a short time, he rose and threw his cap down with unusual force upon the stone floor.

"Hey, old fellow! that means mischief, I know; I never see you do that for nothing."

But the captain, still gazing at his prostrate cap, as if gloating over some fallen enemy, maintained a dogged silence, until, suddenly recollecting himself, he drew up his athletic form, stretched out his clenched fist, and swore that Roughton should be avenged.

Jack had no more to say; Marsloops was in no mood to talk; with a silent shake of the hand the two friends parted, and the captain resumed his seat and his reflections, muttering to himself—"Roughton arrested, then it ain't him—Pitt's house searched—Wakeful had a narrow

escape—Swiveleye in quod—Cinderow hand and glove with Mundy, last night, too—and me in quod. By George it's Mundy! and afore many days are over, he shall be inside this jug;" and with these words down went his cap again.

CHAPTER XXIX.

“At first both parties in reproaches jar,
And make their tongues the trumpets of the war;
They clutch their horny fists, exchange such furious blows,
One scarce escapes with more than half a nose.”—TATE.

“All seek their ends, and each would other cheat,
They only seem to hate, and seem to love,
But int'rest is the point on which they move;
Their friends are foes, and foes are friends again,
And, in their turns, are knaves and honest men.”—DRYDEN.

FOR the third or fourth time Pat Murphy was walking past Pitt's gateway, when he saw that worthy gentleman step leisurely into the street. Pat approached, and Pitt accosted him familiarly—“Hallo! Pat; how are you?”

Pat retorted—“Hallo! Pitt; how are you?”

“Pitt, Pitt!” said he, reddening, for George Gaunt the coal-heaver was discharging a load on the opposite side of the street; “who do you call Pitt? Repeat that and I'll pull your nose for you.”

Pat, with a most provoking leer, protruded that organ towards Mr. Pitt and dared him to the experiment. There was something in Pat's manner so excessively irritating that Pitt's temper could not withstand the impudent challenge; but no sooner did Pat feel the fingers of offended dignity on his nose, than he let fly right and left with his bony fists in Pitt's face, and followed up his attack with such ferocious determination, that his adversary measured his length in the yard, to which he had retreated, and lay



P 190

Pitt and Pat.

sprawling on his back in a state of savage bewilderment, whilst Pat, cutting an ecstatic Hibernian caper, and pointing derisively with his finger, looked down upon him with contemptuous satisfaction. Recovering himself in a few moments, Pitt sprang to his feet, and, goaded by the taunting bursts of laughter bestowed on him by the delighted coal-heaver, he rushed upon Pat with blind fury, only to receive at his hands a repetition still more severe of his first discomfiture.

"Down agin, Misther Pitt; shall I give yer honour a lift," said Pat, with patronizing irony.

"Up, maister, and at him again; I'll see fair play," cried the coal-heaver.

Pitt gathered himself up, looked foolish, and drew out his pocket handkerchief to staunch the copious flow of blood from his flattened nose. Pat looked on with provoking coolness. Pitt muttered—"I'll have you up for this, Mr. Murphy."

"Oh! it's Misther Murphy now, is it? I accept your apology, and as to having me up, Misther Pitt, I'd jist advise," and he stepped up and whispered some talismanic words in his ear, that acted like the subduing charm of the celebrated horse-tamer.

"Well, you're a brave fellow, Pat; come in and have a glass o' grog."

Pat replied—"Me honour's satisfied, and it's no grudge I owe any man, leastways whin I've paid him in full for it; so I'll not be above dhrinkin' your honour's health on the strength on't," and thus the champions adjourned.

Pitt was in no trim to enjoy the spirits, which Pat imbibed with unusual relish; but having applied himself to the cleansing of his besmeared face and garments, he seated himself, uncomfortable as he was, to open a negotiation in order to secure himself against the consequences which

might ensue, were the talismanic communication, before alluded to, breathed in other ears than his own.

Meanwhile the plot was thickening in other quarters. True it was, as already stated by Golightly to the captive Marsloops, that a formal search had been conducted by Cinderow on the premises of Mr. Pitt, and that the doctor was in quod. Mr. Cinderow had proceeded from Mr. Roughton's shop to the house of Mr. Pitt, in both of which cases, as already narrated, he had been just too late to find the packages, which would have been "witnesses strong as death" against them. It was not, however, true that all was right with Mundy because Golightly had seen him and Cinderow together in apparently social conversation with each other; for that was a mere prelude to a more unpleasant result, for which Cinderow was only waiting the arrival of his man. Jack's simple habits sometimes, as in this instance, made him form too hasty conclusions, and he had no sooner slipt away from the scene of Mundy's colloquy with Cinderow, than the latter, reinforced by his man's arrival, suggested an adjournment to the premises of the disconcerted tobacconist, where, after diligent search, sundry bales of tobacco were discovered, together with a yet unemptied chest, to the lid of which still adhered a card addressed to Roughton, and indorsed in large letters—"Drugs, with care."

"Queer sort of drugs these," observed Cinderow, as he marked the Crown's broad arrow on the chest, and transferred the card from the lid to his pocketbook. Then, having secured his seizures, he proceeded to the custom-house, where he found the collector waiting for him with another warrant for the arrest of Swiveleye. Cinderow felt less compunction at executing this commission against the poor doctor than he had experienced on being directed to take Roughton. He proceeded with alacrity to perform

his new task, and finding the miserable half-starved wretch in his comfortless cottage, announced the object of his visit. Poor Swiveleye, who had risen to his feet on the entrance of Cinderow, turned paler if possible than ever, staggered like a drunken man, and would have fallen had he not clutched the time-worn deal table, which, with three antique chairs, constituted the furniture of the gloomy habitation. At length he gasped out—"I thought an informer was entitled to protection."

"But how does that protect *you*?" asked Cinderow.

"Why, the collector took my information against Mr. Roughton."

"What for?" anxiously inquired Cinderow.

"The stuff from the *Phæbus*," replied the doctor.

The light dawned at once upon Cinderow's mind. He felt that he was suspected, or the collector would not have made him the blind instrument of these arrests without confiding to him the information; but how comes it, thought he, that Swiveleye's arrested? On consulting the documents in his possession he found it was for the first offence, and briefly told the doctor that it was tit for tat; he had informed against Roughton for the one offence, and some one else had returned the compliment for the other; but who that "some one else" was neither of them could divine. Be that, however, as it might, there was no alternative but to submit, and Mr. Swiveleye speedily took up his abode in the same mansion as Marsloops.

CHAPTER XXX.

"If imputation and strong circumstances,
Which lead directly to the door of truth,
Will give you satisfaction, you may have it."—SHAKESPEARE.

"But I do know
A many fools that stand in better place,
Garnisht like him, that for a tricky word
Defy the matter."—SHAKESPEARE.

RUMOURS were rife throughout the town of grave and mysterious proceedings going on within the walls of the custom-house, of which the gossips knew little, but as usual talked much. Two strangers had appeared on the scene of action. Each morning as the clock struck ten they might have been seen turning into the gateway of the building, accompanied by the worthy collector. Many were the surmises touching these strangers, but all agreed that their visit had for its object the investigation of the circumstances relating to the late contraband transactions. These gentlemen did not escape the scrutinizing eyes of Jack Golightly, who contrived, unseen himself, to watch them from day to day. Eagerly did he desire to penetrate the gloomy walls of that old grey pile, to play the spy and gratify his keen curiosity; but, for once, even the fertile genius of Jack Golightly was at fault. Poor Harry Roughton's own fears naturally suggested to him the unwelcome truth, that these gentlemen were emissaries of the Crown, who had been commissioned by the metropolitan board to pursue himself

and the other unfortunates who had been denounced by some treachery or other, and that these formidable steps towards their vigorous prosecution rendered it essential that he and they should strain every nerve to prepare for their defence. But what was his position? He had already deposited £500 of his recent plunder in lieu of bail, because Pitt had deserted him when fortune ceased to smile, and he had been deterred, either by pride or shame, from seeking aid in any other quarter. He had also expended a considerable sum in that unlucky venture, which he had fondly hoped would have given him and his late pseudo-friend, Cinderow, a richer prize than his previous transactions had promised or afforded. His greedy desire to secure to himself the whole, had left him without a friend to share the risk and loss. Thus his ready money, ay, even the *honest* earnings of his previous half-year's business—his boasted seventy pounds—all were gone, with the exception of about £100, consisting of some of those questionable notes which had been thrust upon him by his accomplices in the first fraud to which he had become a party. Under these untoward circumstances, Roughton's pecuniary resources were not of the most satisfactory character. Law was not to be had without money, and other urgent claims were impending. Whilst he was dwelling with some uneasiness on the important desideratum of ways and means, he received a visit from Tom Rice, the owner of the *Crown*, who, after abusing him in no measured terms for the loss of that vessel, demanded, with a resolution that brooked no delay, compensation for his ship, adding, with a threat, at which Roughton trembled, that unless he paid the money down he would instantly expose him as the importer of her illicit cargo. Roughton saw nothing but ruin staring him full in the face; and although he had taken measures to prevent Marsloops from impeaching him,

and relied on Cinderow's having reported the seizure as being made without information, he felt that so long as the owner of the seized craft was unconciliated, a heavier prosecution, in point of amount, would ensue than that on which his first arrest had proceeded. He had no alternative but to liquidate the extravagant claim of the outraged fisherman; and, thus, little more than £20 remained of his impoverished resources to meet the demands of attorneys-at-law and counsellors, always excepting a few outstanding debts and the value of his stock in trade. In his prophetic imagination he saw that symbol of ruin—the auctioneer's hammer—already hovering in the air, ready to do its master's bidding—"going, going, going"—and his heart sank within him as the appalling "gone" seemed to sound in his ears. Still the fisherman's demands must be satisfied, and the rest must take its chance. He told out the money with trembling and reluctant hand, saw the hard-visaged man stalk off with cold indifference, and, being left to himself, began to reflect on what he had done and the probable result. So long as that man stood before him he could not think; and now he could only command his thoughts, when too late to turn them to account.

"I have paid," said he to himself; "I have paid that imposing rascal at least one-fourth too much for the crazy old craft, in order to secure myself against exposure; but have I secured that end?"

Alas! no; the vessel and its owner were as well known as Mr. Punch himself. The owner was primarily responsible for the fraud in which his ship had been engaged; and, whether Roughton had paid him or not, he would be called to account; nor could he avert the consequences without giving up the man who had hired her. As Roughton mentally realized these truths, all his fears

returned with renewed force, and he was overcome by despair.

What could he do to ward off this calamity? Could he persuade Marsloops to hold himself out as the wrong-doer, since his position could not well be worse? and could he in that case induce the cunning fisherman to confirm this story?

Roughton would at that moment have given his last shilling to accomplish this infamous expedient, regardless of the accumulation of sin upon sin, so deadened had his moral perceptions become by the influences of repeated crime. Indeed he saw now so little wrong in what he sought to justify as measures of necessity, that he resolved at once to lay the whole case before his wife—that wife whose advice he had spurned when it might have saved him—and consult her upon his nefarious plans. He felt, now that difficulties and dangers overwhelmed him, that she was after all the only one to whom he could unburthen his overcharged mind—the only one on whose counsel he could rely.

He little thought what renewed anguish he should inflict on her by the disclosure of the fact that he had so far diverged from the paths of rectitude—had been so debased in mind as to propose, apparently without repugnance, the deliberate commission of a new crime to cover its predecessor; and great was his surprise to find that she was prepared to encounter the lowest depths of poverty and misery, rather than seek to escape by fraud and falsehood from the evils, however terrible in prospect, in which they were involved.

In the midst of this discussion the door opened, and the rector slowly walked into the room.

Harry's face was flushed and burning with excitement; Jane's cheeks were bedewed with tears, and her eyes were red with weeping. Neither of them rose to greet the new

comer, who saw that their apparent indifference was the result of confusion and shame, not of disrespect. His was an errand of love, and he would not forego it, but quietly and unasked took a chair, and waited a few minutes to give the unhappy pair time to compose themselves.

To relieve them from their embarrassment he was the first to break silence.

"I am not come, Mr. Roughton, to upbraid you, but to offer you such sympathy and advice as I know, under present circumstances, you so much need. I have heard with much pain the events of the last few weeks. I am willing to believe, Mr. Roughton, that you have been the dupe of designing persons, at whose door already lies the ruin of many. You, Mrs. Roughton, I well know have been the helpless sufferer, the innocent victim of a series of evils over which you could have no control, and the causes of which you could not approve. For you and for your hapless children I deeply grieve. I know why neither you nor Mr. Roughton have sought my advice. I am sufficiently consonant with the emotions of the human heart to divine the cause of your constrained estrangement from me; and, in thus intruding, I only seek to do you good."

Poor Jane was almost overwhelmed with mingled feelings of hope and dejection as the good rector proceeded.

Roughton buried his face in his hands, and, despite his endeavours to restrain his feelings, sobbed audibly.

"I came," continued the rector, "to advise you to make your peace with the customs' authorities; to denounce those unscrupulous men who have brought on you this misery; in fact, to 'make a clean breast of it,' and leave yourselves to the clemency of the Crown."

He paused. Roughton raised his head, and, summoning all his energies, replied—

"I can never play the traitor. I know I have been

victimized; but I will defend myself as best I can, and leave the others to do the same."

"That is a false, a mistaken pride, Mr. Roughton; you not only owe a duty to your suffering wife and children, but to your God and your country, whose laws you have been induced to outrage; your conscience cannot be discharged of the heavy weight which presses you down, until you have discharged that debt. I will aid you. I will see the collector in your behalf, and will secure you an interview with the revenue solicitor, who is now in the town; and, if you act on my advice, I think you may yet escape the impending ruin."

Jane urged her obdurate husband to follow the advice of their good pastor.

Harry's conscience told him it was the only right course to pursue; but the deceitful promptings of his rebellious spirit, his mistaken pride, warred against the dictates of his better judgment. He would not yield either to the sober arguments of the rector, or the earnest entreaties of his wife.

"No," said he with dogged perversity, "I will die rather than turn informer to save myself."

"Well," replied the rector, "I will not urge you now, but will leave you to reflect upon it; I trust you will be induced to take a clearer view of the duty you owe to yourself, to your family, and the offended laws of your country. Do not be rash, promise me that you will give your earnest and prayerful consideration to the subject; and, should you change your mind, you have only to communicate with me, and to command my poor services in your behalf; but, let me tell you frankly before I leave you, that, if the weight of affliction under which you now suffer is not enough to soften your unyielding heart, you only challenge, by resistance, a heavier visitation, at the

merciful hand of him of whom it is truly said—'Whom he loveth he chasteneth.' Do not grieve the Holy Spirit. He will not always strive, though he does not willingly afflict the children of men. He only waiteth to be gracious. Do not delay, but remember how fearful a thing it is to become a cast-off. I had hoped better things of you, and I still have hope. I conjure you to repent ere it is too late, and do that which your own conscience must approve. Give me your hand, and look on me as your sincere friend; and do let me hear from you, and that soon. I shall rejoice to serve you—may God bless and guide you aright." With these words he bade them adieu.

Harry felt the force of this exhortation, and Jane implored him not to disregard it. His obstinacy was shaken; he resolved to act upon the good man's advice, rose, put on his greatcoat, and bent his steps towards the custom-house.

As he neared that building he endeavoured to collect his bewildered thoughts, and to shape the story he was about to divulge; but in the midst of his meditations he was accosted by Golightly.

"Hallo! Master Roughton, I'm afeard the game is up; I've just seen Swiveleye and Smith go into the custom-house with Watterson. I know that dirty squinting thief is at the bottom of all this; there isn't another man among 'em as would ha' let himself down to do the dirty work of informer; but he has peached, I know, or he wouldn't be going with Watterson to see them London chaps.

"Dirty work of informer"—"peached," repeated Roughton to himself; and mentally applying the galling imputation to himself, he recoiled from the ignominy which, even in the mind of that young scapegrace, it carried with it—spurned the course he was about to have pursued—forgot in an instant the paternal injunctions and Christian-like counsels

of his once revered pastor—yielded to the taunts of a young and reckless vagabond—turned upon his heel, and directed his steps to the office of the pettifogging lawyer, Sharpe—the defender of Wakeful before old Squire Salt. All hope of even a middle course vanished: he had committed himself to the care and guidance of one of those black sheep, who regard only the interests of their clients through that partial and often distorted medium which appears most calculated to secure their own. So much more powerful are the influences of evil than of good in the conflicts with which poor human nature has to contend in this world of trial.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"It is reported you possess a book,
Wherein you have quoted, by intelligence,
The names of all notorious offenders
Lurking about the city."—WHITE DEVIL, O. PL.

"A little curly-headed, good-for-nothing,
And mischief-making monkey from his birth ;
His parents ne'er agreed except in doating
Upon this most unquiet imp on earth."—BYRON.

"HALLO! Wakeful," exclaimed Jack Golightly, as he entered the garret in which his friend had taken up his abode, "I've seen these gents again along with old Punch, and I think they're *somebodies*—o' some note, I mean."

"Why!" inquired Wakeful; "what makes ye think that?"

"Well, I'll just tell you how I put this and that together. You know it ain't everybody as can touch old Punch with a long pole; he's gen'ly as stiff as a lord, and looks a good deal like one to my thoughts; but he seems all hand-in-glove-like with them gents, and laughs and jokes with 'em as if they were all brothers."

"Go on, go on," said Wakeful, impatiently; "I know old Punch well enough; but I want to hear some'at about t'other chaps; for I know they're come down about our job."

"Don't hurry," replied Jack, "and I'll tell you all I know. You see one on 'em 's rather a stout, thickset gent, with sandyish hair and a sharp eye in his head, as bolt

upright as a' admiral, and as bustling as if he didn't mean the grass to grow under his feet; and then the one as tuk his arm was rayther thinnish, but I'm bothered if I know whether he's a young un or not, for his hair is as white as old Punch's, and in his black coat and white choker looks more like a parson nor anythink else, only he had a bundle o' papers under his arm, tied up with red ribbons."

"I'll bet any money that's the lawyer," ejaculated Wakeful. "Did he look like a hang-dog sort of a chap?"

"No; I can't say that," rejoined Jack. "He didn't look as if he'd hurt anybody; but there's no knowin' how much devil lies behind smooth looks; but onyhow he's the oldest young man or the youngest old man as ever I set eyes on. So now you know as much about 'em as I do; but I mean to know more."

"An' how's that to be come at, Jack?"

"Why, you see they ain't come here for nothin', and I think I shall jist git a hearin' wi' 'em to tell 'em a bit o' my mind, an' I may get a bit o' theirs. I can offer myself as a' evidence for Jimmy Cinderow, an' I can tell 'em as much an' as little as I like, you know, and mayhap may learn some'at, and blind 'em a bit into the bargain."

"P'rhaps yis, and p'rhaps no," observed Wakeful; "and I think, Jack, lad, you're as well away, or you may put your foot in it."

Jack ruminated a little while, and then, taking an extra glass of beer, started off again on his explorations.

His descriptions of the two strangers were not very inapt. The first of these gentlemen was Mr. Pugh, a highly-intelligent and smart officer from another port, sent there expressly to co-operate with Mr. Punch; the other was the revenue solicitor. Nor was this long a secret, for the more Jack and his rustic friend, Wakeful, pried into the movements and occupations of these gentlemen, the

more convinced were they of the object of their visit, and of the dangers which appeared to thicken around them and their accomplices; but the reckless activity of Golightly would not suffer him to be quiet. The only wonder was that he had not, despite all his astuteness, attracted earlier notice and suspicion. After leaving Wakeful at the Blue Boar, he dropt in at the gaol to pay a brief visit to the captain. He had become familiar with the turnkey; admission at any time was now easy, and his attentions to his newly-adopted *uncle* frequent. As he left the cell he encountered the two gentlemen who had been the object of his speculations. He slunk by them, as he thought, unobserved; but to his great mortification could get nothing out of the usually garrulous turnkey touching these strangers, the object of their visit, or what had led to it. This whetted more than ever his desire to make their acquaintance, so he hurried off to the custom-house once more to waylay his friend Cinderow, and procure through him the requisite introduction. He had not long taken up his position opposite the gateway, before the two mysterious gentlemen suddenly came upon him on their return, but passed apparently without farther notice than an ordinary stranger would attract. Jack saw them turn in and mount the dark staircase in lively conversation; but no Cinderow appeared to take him in tow; yet the longer the young scapegrace was kept on the tenter-hooks, the stronger grew his desire to accomplish his end and gratify his curiosity. At length Mr. Watterson approached, and the youngster boldly accosted him—"I beg your pardon, Sir; but there's some gen'l'men down from Lunnun, ain't they?"

"Well! and what is that to you, my lad?"

"Why," replied he, "if they're wanting to know about that Oldburgh consarn, I think I could tell 'em some'at."

"Come along, then," replied Watterson, and Jack fol-

lowed him to the door of the room occupied by the strangers. "Wait there a bit," said Watterson, as, after a gentle rap, he entered the room.

Jack's ear was instantly applied to the keyhole, but with little advantage, for the only words he caught from one of the strangers, as Mr. Watterson's hand was laid on the handle of the door, were—"Show him in." Jack had just time to recover his perpendicular as Mr. Watterson, making a sign to enter, opened the door and then closing it upon him, left him to his coveted encounter with Mr. Pugh and the solicitor.

Notwithstanding all his accustomed effrontery and tact, he felt somewhat abashed and awkward as the two gentlemen coolly surveyed him from head to foot, and without speaking, beckoned him to the table opposite which they were sitting.

The solicitor tore off a scrap of the blotting paper which lay before him and handed it to Mr. Pugh, who recognized, in a rough sketch of the previous day, the figure of the lad who had twice crossed their path at the gaol and opposite the custom-house, and who now stood before them. Mr. Pugh laughed, put the scrap into his waistcoat pocket, and, turning to young Golightly, asked drily—"Well, what do you want?"

The question was so simple that it rather puzzled Jack to know how to answer it; so after giving his hat, in which he seemed to be looking for a reply, two or three ungainly twists round his thumb, he said—"I dunna know, gen'l'men, as I want onythink egzacly."

"Then, what are you come here for?" resumed Mr. Pugh.

"Well! why I thought mayhap I might tell ye some'at about that job."

"What job?" provokingly inquired Mr. Pugh.

"I mean about that consarn at Oldburgh, Sir."

"And pray, what do you know about it?"

"Why you see, Sir, I was there, Sir."

"Very well; then you know all about it, and you had better tell your own story, in your own way; it's of no use beating about the bush, our time is valuable."

"Sir, I'm come to answer any questions you like to ax me, Sir."

"Tell your own story, man; and then, if we've any questions to ask, it will be time enough. Now, go on."

This was not precisely what the hopeful young gentleman had anticipated. He had expected to be met by a series of questions, from the complexion of which he had flattered himself he should worm out what they knew or were driving at, and that he could fence with them, and answer as might best suit his purpose. He felt himself in a dilemma from which there was no escape, and apprehended no inconsiderable difficulty in complying with the injunction to give a straightforward statement, lest he should let slip something that might open the eyes of the strangers to what might be safer concealed. Whilst revolving these thoughts in his mind, Mr. Pugh suddenly exclaimed—

"Well! have you anything to say or not?" and, without waiting for an answer, added—"What's your name?"

"My name, Sir?"

"Yes, surely you know your own name."

"John Riley, Sir; that's my name, Sir."

"Very well, John Riley, or Jack Golightly, or whatever it is, now for your story."

"I can't say as I know much about it, Sir; only you see, Sir, it was me as druv the cart, Sir; I was hired for the job by Mr. Cinderow, Sir."

"Hey! who? Mr. Cinderow; mind, are you right about that?"

"Well, Sir, I was not egzactly hired by him, but for him."

"And who by?"

"I can't justly say what his name is; but I mean the doctor—Swiveleye; that's it, Sir."

"What, then, you don't justly know the name of your own father. Is that what I am to understand?"

"My own father, Sir?" gasped Golightly, blushing, perhaps for the first time in his life.

"Yes, he's your father, when your filial duty leads you here to make inquiries after him. Is it not so?"

"I don't egzactly know what you mean, Sir."

"Oh! you don't," observed Mr. Pugh, as he extended his hand to the bell. He then wrote two or three words on a slip of paper, which the servant who answered the summons silently carried away.

"Then Mr. Swiveleye is not your father. Is that what you mean?" But, before the question was answered, Mr. B. Politeful bowed himself into the room and up to the table.

"Do you know this young gentleman, Mr. B. Politeful?" asked Mr. Pugh.

"I've seen him before, Sir," replied Mr. B. Politeful, with two or three profound bows.

"I ask, do you know him? Pray give an answer."

Bowing again, and turning towards Jack, he said—"Yes, Sir; yes, Sir; Mr. Swiveleye's son, Sir."

"And how do you know that?" asked Mr. Pugh.

With another bow he replied—"Because he told me so himself a day or two ago."

"Very well, that will do; the dutiful son had either forgotten his father or forgotten himself for the moment. That's all; you need not wait;" and Mr. Politeful bowed himself out again.

"Well now, Mr. Riley, Golightly, Swiveleye, your story if you please."

Jack proceeded most uncomfortably to recount such of the events of the night on which the twenty bales were seized, as he thought he might safely divulge, and on making some allusion to the captain, Mr. Pugh again interposed—

"You mean your uncle, Captain Marsloops, I suppose?"

"My uncle, Sir, he ain't no uncle of mine."

"Then either he or you don't know how to speak the truth, for he told us you were his excellent nephew, and as good a lad as ever walked on English ground."

"Oh! that was only his fun, Sir," replied Jack, with a comical grin.

"Fun! was it? Then I suppose it was only your fun too, when you got admission to the captain in that character, on the same pretence to the gaoler?"

"I don't see as how there's ony harm i' that, no how," replied Jack.

"Well! let that pass. So you were employed by Messrs. Cinderow and Swiveleye on the night of the last run. Pray what force had Mr. Cinderow for the occasion?"

"There was four on us."

"Who were they?"

"His own man and himself, and me and the doctor."

"The doctor! you mean Swiveleye! He was the owner of the ship, I believe. Did Mr. Cinderow know that?"

"I reckon he did, Sir; I heard 'em a talkin' about it."

"And you saw the ship and the captain?"

"Well I can't egzacly say as how I did; but I seed the boat and I seed the captain."

"Could'nt Cinderow and his three assistants have taken the captain and the boat?"

"Mayhap he might; yes, no doubt; but ye see, Sir, that wa'n't the bargain."

"The bargain, oh! then there was a bargain not to seize them, was there? And pray, who did Cinderow make that bargain with?"

"Swiveleye, Sir! Ye see, he said, as how he was reg'lar innocent of the job, 'cause his captain had agreed with somebody to fetch the stuff unbeknown to him."

"Then that was a reason why he so much wished to save the captain?"

"I can't tell nothin' about that, Sir."

"Perhaps you can tell me who that somebody was that the captain was to fetch the stuff for?"

"No, Sir, I can't say as how I can."

"Why! Did you see nobody there ready to receive it?"

"No, Sir, I'm blest if I did."

"Oh, then, I am to suppose that the captain was to put the stuff ashore, and leave it on the beach till somebody fetched it. Now, Mr. Golightly, was not Mr. Cinderow that somebody?"

"Well, Sir; you see I'm no partic'lar scholar, and I can't tell the upshot of sich consarns."

"But it does not require any great scholarship to answer a simple question like that. Surely a lawyer's clerk ought not to plead his want of learning."

"Lawyer's clerk, Sir!"

"Yes, lawyer's clerk; you act occasionally in that capacity, and I presume Mr. Sharpe does not complain of your inability."

"That wasn't about this job," said Jack, exhibiting much surprise and confusion of manner.

"No," replied Mr. Pugh, "the previous case, in which your friend Wakeful first figured at your request."

Golightly's eyes flashed, as he sharply demanded—"Did he tell you that, Sir?"

"Never mind. But why do you ask?"

"'Cause nobody else could."

"Well, then, you don't deny it?"

"It's no use denyin' on it."

"Then, perhaps, you'll just tell me who that active young sailor was who delivered that little note to Mr. Roughton?"

"Can't say, Sir."

"Oh! you can't. Well you, perhaps, can help me to the name of the servant lad who left a curious prescription with Mr. Roughton one morning, or tell me, who was the shivering beggar that got sixpence out of his pocket. Was it not Mr. Swiveleye's waggoner's lad, Mr. Sharpe's clerk, or, in other words, Riley, *alias* Swiveleye, *alias* Golightly?"

"I don't see as it's only use my stoppin' here, Sir."

"Perhaps not; but that's no answer to my question."

"I don't know nothin' about Mr. Roughton."

"No! what, not know the gentleman you met at the Blue Boar with your excellent father Mr. Swiveleye, and your uncle Marsloops?"

"I tell you they ain't my father and uncle."

"Then what relation may Mr. Mundy be?"

"He's no relation of mine, no more nor you is."

"How was it they were so generous to you? For you know you pocketed a nice little sum of money."

"I don't see as how my private cansarns has ought to do with this 'ere job."

"Perhaps not; but I suppose you are not in the habit of working for nothing, and that the money was paid for some good services of yours?"

"I'd rayther say nothin' about that, Sir."

"Very good; but if you object to say why you were so

well paid, you have no objection to tell me why Swiveley was such a fool as not only to put into Cinderow's hands twenty bales of tobacco, but himself too?"

"Well, Sir, you see he was to go shares with Master Cinderow in that job; and it's what I call shabby to do the poor fellow out of that, and quod him for it an' all."

"But besides sharing in what was seized, was it not part of the plan to get clear off with two other lots at places on both sides?"

"I'd nothin' to do with that, Sir. Can't say nothin' to it."

"How was it the coast-guard were not there?"

"They was busy somewheres else."

"And who sent them somewhere else?"

"I don't no, Sir."

"You don't! Now, if the coast-gaurd had been there, wouldn't they have taken some of the crew, and have helped in the seizure of the goods?"

"Why, to be sure they would; but then, you see, Mr. Cinderow wouldn't ha' had the job to himself?"

"Exactly so! Then do you mean to tell me that they were not thrown off the scent on purpose?"

"Can't say, Sir."

"Now, do you mean to tell me that you don't know that they were watching your friend Wakeful and his empty cart two or three miles off, and that they did not start until after Cinderow and you had reached the lane end leading to the cliffs?"

"Well, that's true, Sir."

"And who took Mr. Cinderow's note to the lieutenant just before he started? Didn't you, now?"

"I took a note sure enough; it's no use denyin' it."

During this dialogue the solicitor sat with apparent unconcern, playing carelessly with his pen, and occasionally

scratching something on a sheet of paper, scarcely ever even turning his eye upon Jack; but at length suddenly breaking in upon the conversation with the simple inquiry—"Oh, this is Golightly, is it? Now, Golightly," continued he, as he glanced at his sheet of paper; "then I understand you to say that you were concerned in two runs of tobacco near Oldburgh cliff. That Mr. Roughton, Marsloops, Swiveleye, Wakeful, yourself, and some others were the persons engaged in these transactions—that the parties concerned escaped by agreement with Mr. Cinderow—that the coast-guard were designedly kept out of the way, that they might not participate in the seizure—that Mr. Mundy was the receiver of part of the goods, and that you took your share in the plunder. Now is all that true?"

"Well, Sir, I can't say as how it isn't."

"Then can you say that it is?"

"Then it is, if you must know; it's no use denyin' it, for I see you know all about it."

"Then sign it," said the solicitor, as he pushed the paper towards him and held out the pen. Jack drew back, observing—

"I didn't come here to sign nothink."

"I don't know what you came here for," rejoined the solicitor; "I can only say I didn't send for you; but you have made out a pretty good case against yourself, my lad, and I'll either take it as your own confession against yourself, or your evidence against your accomplices—just as you please."

Jack, half stupified, pondered over these last words for some time, gazing blankly at the paper, and at length, as if prompted by some sudden nervous impulse, he seized the pen, scribbled rather illegibly his name, and then, with a gasp, ejaculated—"There! I've done it, and I am a cuss'd informer."

"You may go," said the solicitor. Jack did not wait to be told so twice, and, as he descended the stairs, muttered to himself—"If I'd ha' know'd as it had ha' come to this, blow me if iver I'd a trusted mysen in the clutches of them snapdragons." Wiping the perspiration from his brow with his sleeve, he emerged into the street and slunk away, as if he were thoroughly ashamed of himself, his weakness, and his previously undreamt-of treachery. Poor Jack's ingenuity in the preservation of character, the cat-like celerity with which he stealthily transported himself from place to place, the cunning with which he played the spy, and the praise which his adroitness had elicited from the men whom he so indefatigably served, had given him such an exalted opinion of his own skill that he had the vanity to think that he could cope with anybody. Imagining that the depth and cunning which are held in such high repute by the low and designing devotees of fraud and chicanery, would serve his purpose equally well when coming into contact with antagonists of a higher character and more intellectual attainments, he had thus entered the lists with the two strangers, in the full confidence that his powers of artifice and deception would enable him to bamboozle them, as he called it. Jack was, therefore, deeply chagrined as he recalled the various episodes of the recent encounter, in which the tables had been so completely turned upon himself. He wondered how they could have acquired the information relating to his own movements, by which he was tripped up at every turn, and compelled, by force of circumstances, to confirm and strengthen the case against himself and his own friends. He had forgotten, or rather, perhaps, he had not as yet had experience enough to learn, that whenever the associates in crime begin to discover the great truth, that "their sins will find them out," and, that the day of reckoning is at hand, those of

them who have been foremost in the conspiracy to deceive their neighbours, or to violate the law, are the first to betray their accomplices, in order to secure immunity for themselves. Golightly's eyes began to be opened as he recalled the many things with which the two strangers were as well acquainted as himself, and which, as he turned them over in his mind one by one, he knew must have come from different sources. Swiveleye could only know such and such facts; Marsloops must have told so and so; Wakeful only could have divulged another piece of information. "Why, curse them!" exclaimed Jack, in bitter soliloquy, "the scamps have all informed one against another, without letting me into the secret, and, perhaps, I am one of their victims too." This sudden conviction was maddening. "I can trust none of 'em," said he; "I'll cut the brutes for ever." With this resolute conclusion, Jack disappeared from the scene, and was never heard of more, unless the prevalent conjecture was right, that a young fellow answering to his description, who had started by the parliamentary train that night for Leeds, and who was subsequently hanged for some great offence at Lancaster, was the identical Jack Golightly.

He, however, was gone, and the two gentlemen at the custom-house reviewed the various depositions they had taken, concluding with that of young Golightly.

"Well," said Mr. Pugh, "and what do you think of the case?"

"Why, as good a case as ever went into court," replied the solicitor, "when we have cleared away all the falsehood with which it abounds, and reconciled with truth the conflicting statements of these treacherous fellows." Then, turning over the manuscript pages, he commented upon them one by one. "Old Swiveleye lies like a Trojan, and suppresses half the truth; Marsloops contradicts him;

Cinderow's statement is at variance with both ; Wakeful is as far off the mark ; Smith flatly opposes him ; and Riley *alias* Golightly gives the lie in many particulars to all the others. Now let us go to dinner."

The two gentlemen adjourned, and whilst discussing the events of the day over their bottle of wine, both concurred in opinion that, although they had not seen Roughton, the chief object of the prosecution, the most painful consideration connected with the whole affair was, that he was perhaps more to be commiserated than any of the party, whilst the greatest scamp would probably escape.

Mr. Sharpe learnt very speedily the leading features of his new client's case. It appeared to him that unless Cinderow allowed the fact to escape that he had seen Roughton near the place of landing on the night of the run, and his accomplices did not impeach him, there was but little known to connect him with the transaction. Cinderow was not likely to volunteer information which might subject himself to censure for not securing Roughton on the spot ; and when Mr. Sharpe learned from Roughton the unholy suggestion made on that occasion by Cinderow, and the compact subsequently based upon it, although the design, so far as Roughton was concerned, had failed, he rejoiced in the belief that the most material secret was safe ; and, rubbing his hands with evident satisfaction, he exclaimed—"Good, good ! Mr. Roughton, we must win, eh ?"

"I am glad you think so," replied Roughton rather dubiously ; "but I cannot exactly see how."

"Well, but we must win, I say," rejoined Mr. Sharpe ; "my motto is win—win honestly if you can, but *anyhow* win. Leave it to me, I must see you again soon, and if anything turns up let me know."

"Mr. Roughton strolled homewards in no very enviable

state of mind, and dulled as his own appreciation of the distinctions between right and wrong had become by familiarization with the by-paths of fraud, he could scarcely suppress a feeling of repugnance as he contemplated the loose code of morality which governed his legal adviser.

CHAPTER XXXII.

“Sages esteem'd
And venerably learn'd, as in the school
Of legal science, or in that of worth
And sentiment exalted, fill the bench.”—DODD.

“Here stern law,
With visage all unbending, eyes alone
The rigorous act. Confession here is guilt,
And restitution perfect loss.”—DODD.

It must not be imagined that, whilst the prosecutors were busily occupied in stringing together the various facts as they transpired, and testing by every means the truth of the different statements offered for their consideration, the unfortunate defendants, of whom Roughton was viewed as the principal, were idle in the preparation of their defence. Many were the visits to, and anxious conferences of Mr. Roughton with, his legal adviser, Mr. Sharpe. Every shilling he could raise was swallowed up by the pocket of the rapacious little attorney-at-law. Many were the dark suggestions thrown out by that estimable man of the necessity for procuring, by which he meant manufacturing, evidence to rebut the case against his client; and, curious as it may seem, much of poor Roughton's money was diverted into the pockets of the very men who were at that moment, by giving information to the Crown, playing the game of traitor towards him—a fact which it remained for their victim to discover when they should

appear in their true colours in the witness-box. Rough-ton's coffers were exhausted; his outstanding bills were well nigh all got in, at the risk of offending his customers; his business was daily failing with his reputation. He felt that he never could again hold up his head in that town, even if the flattering assurances of Mr. Sharpe should be realized, and his client gain a verdict. He must sooner or later dispose of his business, and he had better do so before it grew worse. It was hurried into the market and sold—stock-in-trade, household goods and furniture—all at a ruinous sacrifice, and the proceeds set aside to defray the expenses of the coming trial and to maintain himself and family in lodgings, until that eventful day was over, when he hoped to resettle in a small way somewhere else. And so matters went on until the fatal morning, which was either to see him a convicted smuggler, hampered by heavy penalties which he could never pay, and his wife and children beggars; or himself restored to the world with a damaged character, even if the law should, through the skill of Mr. Sharpe, fail to reach its victim.

The court opened with the usual solemnities which precede the investigation of the hundreds of cases upon which ruin, loss of liberty, ay, and life itself hang as it were upon a thread. Many hearts beat high with hope and expectation; others palpitating with agonizing anxiety, or alternating between hope and fear. It is not merely the felon in the criminal's cell awaiting his doom, who feels the pressure of overwhelming doubt; nay, many of the hardened and incorrigible inmates of the common gaol, steeped in wickedness and crime of the deepest dye, and who have the last penalty of the law in immediate prospect, really suffer less mental agony in the anticipation of their fearful doom, than the unfortunate debtor or creditor, suitor or defendant, on the civil side, often feels in the contem-

plation of a verdict, which may consign him to pecuniary ruin, make shipwreck of his character, and precipitate his wife and children from the comforts of the domestic hearth to the confines of the workhouse, and himself into the jaws of a gaol. The position and feelings of the unhappy dupe, Harry Roughton, were analogous to these. Jane had accompanied him with all the solicitude of an anxious and devoted wife. She would not leave his side, when such support and consolation as she could give might be most needed, although she utterly disapproved of the course he had taken in repudiating the advice of their kind-hearted rector, and making himself more obnoxious to his prosecutors by an obstinate and probably vain resistance.

Hour after hour of feverish anxiety rolled on. Case after case was disposed of, struck out of the list, or postponed by arrangement, and at length the monotonous cry was heard—

“The Attorney-general against Roughton.”

“The special jury in the Queen *v.* Roughton.”

A dozen gentlemen were seen hurrying across the hall, or along the avenues to the court.

Mr. Sharpe, with his accustomed effrontery and brusquerie, bustled up to Mr. Roughton, rubbing his hands, and exclaiming—

“On at last; the case is just called on. They are swearing the jury. Would you like to go into court?”

“Yes,” eagerly replied Roughton.

“And I will go, too,” added Jane.

“Come along, then,” said the attorney, bounding off with his clients at his heels. They stumbled on Pat Murphy in their way, but he had only time to say, with an expressive twinkle of his half-closed eye—

“Suppened on the other side.”

“All right; glad of it,” replied Sharpe.

Harry and his wife wondered why ; but Sharpe hurried them into court, and placed them in one of the back rows, behind the ranks of counsel.

Before they were well seated, Jane whispered—

“They are talking about us ;” for during the bustle and confusion outside, and up to the moment they found themselves in court, the usual forms of law had progressed with the routine matter-of-fact speed of such preliminaries ; the twelve men who were to try the issue joined, were seated in a double row in the jury box, and the counsel for the prosecution was opening his case, which he assured the jury would, as the facts were brought before them, disclose such a tissue of fraud and daring crime as was seldom presented to a jury, except in the criminal courts, although here the Crown only sought the recovery of pecuniary penalties. He detailed, with dry precision, the leading facts of the case, which he was about to prove ; pointed out forcibly that the object of these prosecutions was not merely the protection of the revenue, the suppression and punishment of fraud, but the protection of the honest trader, who duly paid the duties imposed by law on his legitimate importations, and who could not compete with his unscrupulous neighbour. The clandestine importer, by a shameless violation of the law, evaded the payment of those duties, and could afford to undersell the conscientious merchant and dealer in the same article. Thus the honest man was ruined, and the rogue enriched at his expense.

“Yes, gentlemen, and at your expense, at the expense of the whole community, excepting, perhaps, the dishonest purchaser ; inasmuch as every shilling of duties thus displaced or fraudulently diverted from the treasury, must necessarily be replaced by income or other taxes upon you, upon me, upon the people of this country.”

Whilst the learned gentleman related the various circumstances of the case with as much accuracy as if he had been an actual spectator of the transaction in all its stages, Harry's heart sunk within him, and in his pallid and careworn countenance was unmistakably written the utter hopelessness that overwhelmed him.

Mr. Sharpe, anxious to preserve appearances, rather than from generosity of feeling, leaned back to reassure his client, to beg of him to look cheerful, and put a good face on it. "All mere statement, mere statement, I assure you," said he. "He has got to prove it yet; we'll see, we'll see! don't be down-hearted."

Harry smiled faintly, but conscience brought the damning conviction of the truth of the narration home to him, and made that smile a hollow mockery. By the time the opening address was ended he felt himself a convicted scoundrel, whatever might be the decision of the jury.

Mr. Cinderow, as the seizing officer, was the first witness called. He looked more like a culprit than an independent witness of truth, but he detailed, with great care, the naked facts relating to the two seizures at Oldburgh Cliffs, for both had been combined in the information; but he avoided everything which was likely to evoke an examination into those parts of his conduct, which might, if the truth came to light, place him in a questionable position with the authorities of the department in which he was employed. He avoided even the least allusion to Mr. Roughton, except when called upon to produce the card which he had taken from the chest at Mr. Mundy's.

"But what," interposed Mr. Snubbs, the defendant's counsel, "What on earth had my client to do with Mr. Mundy, or Mr. Mundy with him?"

"I'll show you presently," retorted the counsel for the prosecution, and he proceeded to read the card, addressed

"Mr. Roughton—Drugs, with care." "I'll show you by and by what drugs these were."

"But I must protest," said Mr. Snubbs; "I submit, my lord—"

Here his lordship drily interposed—"I presume it is intended to identify the defendant with that card."

"Yes, my lord, I'm coming to that presently. This card was found upon—"

"Nay, if my learned friend is going to give evidence let him be sworn," interposed Mr. Snubbs.

"Now really, Mr. Snubbs, you will save the time of the court by leaving me to take the natural course."

"But my lord! I appeal to your lordship, not one word has been said about my client by the witness, nothing to connect Mr. Mundy with him in this transaction."

"No," replied his lordship; "it is a fact in the case; a chest of tobacco was seized upon the premises of Mundy, this card was attached to the chest; that is a fact in the case. It will not affect your client one way or other, unless he is identified with it."

"But, my lord," interposed Mr. Snubbs, "my learned friend does not even suggest that this card is in the handwriting of my client, or that he knew anything of it."

"No," replied his lordship, "I do not understand that that is even suggested. That would be inconsistent. It is addressed, not by, but to the defendant. At present it is a naked fact that this card was upon the seized chest, bearing the name of Roughton, and some reference to his trade or calling. I agree with you that unless Roughton is identified with it by further evidence, it will not affect him any more than it would affect you or me, had Mundy or any one else affixed your name and address, or mine, to one of his chests."

"Exactly so, my lord," replied the counsel for the Crown;

"I shall call a witness to show from whence that chest came, and to show the defendant's connection with it. I only put in the card now because the witness who found it can alone produce it. He is now in the box. It will save the necessity for recalling him." Then turning to the witness he proceeded—

"Now, Mr. Cinderow, you found that card, you say, attached to the lid of a box in Mr. Mundy's cellar?"

"I did, Sir."

"And that box contained tobacco similar to what you seized at Oldburgh Cliff?"

"It did, Sir."

"I have no other question to ask," observed the counsel for the prosecution.

"I submit, my lord," said Mr. Snubbs, "this may be good evidence against Mr. Mundy, but it is not admissible against my client. There is no evidence of my client being either at Oldburgh Cliff, or at Mr. Mundy's."

"At present it does not affect him," replied his lordship, "I have said so before;" and then turning to the witness, his lordship asked—"Did you see anything of the defendant at the place on the night of the landing?"

Cinderow looked uncomfortable, affected not to hear or understand the question. The judge repeated it, adding—"It is a very plain question; speak out, man."

"I believe he was there, my lord."

"You believe he was. I ask'd, did you see him there?"

"I did, my lord."

His lordship gave a knowing, but blank sort of look at the counsel on both sides, as he quietly laid down his pen, rested his elbow on his desk, and waited the result of the contention, which he conceived the bone he had given them to pick would awaken.

"I will just ask another question upon that," said the

counsel for the Crown; "Mr. Cinderow, do I understand you that the defendant was at the landing?"

"Yes, Sir," said Cinderow in a confused tone.

"Why did you not detain him?"

"You see, Sir, I had made the seizure, and some of the crew of the vessel were at hand; so if I had resorted to violence with Mr. Roughton, he might have given an alarm and caused me and my man to be overpowered, and I might have lost the goods, and perhaps been injured myself for no good, and I knew I could find him any time."

"Exactly so; discretion is the better part of valour—that will do."

Uprose Mr. Snubbs, and putting on a grave and stern look, very sententiously reminded Mr. Cinderow of the solemnity of an oath, and then proceeded—"So, Mr. Cinderella,"—

"Cinderow's my name," observed the witness, drawing himself up.

"Well, Mr. Cinderow then—So you saw Mr. Roughton at Oldburgh Cliff, you say; now why did you not take him?"

"He has answered that question once," interposed his lordship.

"Yes, my lord, but I put it again. Why did you not take him?"

"I've already explained that, Sir."

"Never mind, explain again."

"I might have lost the seizure and the prisoner as well, if I had brought the party on me."

"Then why did you not secure the aid of the coast-guard?"

"They did not happen to be there, Sir."

"Oh! they didn't happen to be there. Then will you tell me how you chanced to be there?"

"I expected something was going to be done."

"Pray, what made you suspect that?"

"I had had some information, Sir."

"To what effect?"

"That there was likely to be a run there."

"You live in the town, I believe, some eight or ten miles off?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Then you must have been informed that there was going to be a run there, before you took a run there yourself, eh?"

"Of course I was, Sir."

"Of course—Well now, pray, who was your informer?"

"I object to that," observed the Crown's counsel; "he is not bound to answer that question."

The judge nodded assent.

"Well—I know the great power of the Crown—I believe I cannot press that; but come, Mr. Cinderow, perhaps you can tell me whether there was a person there called Swiveleye?"

"There might be."

"Yes, I know there might be, but I ask was there?"

"I believe there was."

"Very well—Now had you any conversation with that man, before you went there, before you left town?"

"I am not obliged to answer that question."

"Yes you are; come, was it not so?"

"I have conversations with many people."

"Y-e-s, and that man amongst the number, eh?"

"Well, Sir, there's no harm in that."

"Oh no! certainly not, but in consequence of that conversation did you go to Oldburgh?"

"I object to that," said the Crown counsel.

"You may object as much as you please," retorted

Mr. Snubbs, in a confident tone, "but I shall go on. I do not ask what was the conversation, but I ask again—Did you not go in consequence of it?"

"My lord," interposed the counsel for the prosecution, "I must protest—"

"Very well," exclaimed Mr. Snubbs, "I'll put it another way. Did you not go after your conversation with Swiveleye in town?"

"Of course I did."

"Of course you did," repeated Mr. Snubbs, with a triumphant look at the jury; "and now let me ask—Did Mr. Swiveleye go with you?"

"No indeed!" replied Cinderow, with an indignant air.

"No! That would be *infra dig*. I suppose—Then who did he go with?"

"A young man of the name of Golightly."

"He is here, I suppose?" asked Mr. Snubbs in a half-bantering tone.

"No, he is out of the way, Sir."

"Oh! he is out of the way, is he? how comes that?"

"I can't say, Sir."

"Why he was examined by the customs' solicitor, at your custom-house, was he not?"

"I believe he was, Sir."

"And he is not here? very well! very well! Now how did these two gentlemen go?"

"I believe they went in a cart, Sir."

"And you in a gig?"

"Yes."

"Then you went the fastest, I suppose?"

"I suppose I did."

"You suppose you did—Now which got there first, you or they?"

"Really, Mr. Snubbs, I must interpose," said the Crown's

counsel; "this is wasting time with trivial questions, the object of which I cannot divine."

"Perhaps not, perhaps not; we'll see," replied Mr. Snubbs. "So you had a conversation, Mr. Cinderow, with Swiveley before you left town; he started long before you in a heavy cart, and, though you went in a gig, he was there first. Is that so?"

"It is, Sir."

"Now, Sir, was it not your duty to apprise the coast-guard of any intended landing within your knowledge, and to secure their aid?"

Cinderow looked blank. Mr. Snubbs insisted on an answer, and obtained a reluctant affirmative.

"Then did you give any notice to the coast-guard?"

"I had not time."

"Not time! why could you not have despatched a messenger to the station in less time than Swiveley could get to Oldburgh in a cart?"

"I had a good deal to see to before I started," replied Cinderow.

"And was that the reason?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Take care. Now, upon your oath, Mr. Cinderow, was it not understood between you and Swiveley that no other officer should participate in the seizure?"

"I decline to answer that question."

"And why?"

"I'm not bound to tell you what my informer said."

"Oh!" ejaculated Mr. Snubbs with a triumphant chuckle; "it is out at last," and he glanced blandly at the jury.

"So you would not tell me before, and my learned friend objected to your telling me who was your informer; but now the cat is out of the bag, let us hear a little more

of your friend Swiveleye. Pray is he not the owner of the vessel that brought the seized tobacco?"

"I dont see how he could find money enugh to buy a ship."

"No evasion, Sir; that is another question. But I ask you—Is he not the registered owner?"

"Well, yes, Sir, I believe he is, Sir."

"You may stand down."

Mr. Swiveleye himself was next called, and he cut a more miserable figure even than Cinderow. He was followed by several others, and amongst the number by Patrick Murphy, at whose presence in the box Roughton, notwithstanding he had been prepared by Pat himself for his appearance as the Crown's witness, could not suppress a feeling of uneasiness.

After a few preliminary questions of little moment, the counsel for the prosecution pressed him hard as to the box or chest which he had taken to Mr. Mundy's from his master's.

"Will you swear that there was no tobacco in that chest?"

"I will, Sir."

"You will, Sir. Think again."

"It's little use thinkin', yer honour, whin I'm sure."

The learned gentleman turned over the pages of his brief in evident perplexity. A rapid colloquy, in a whisper, ensued between him and the solicitor, and he returned to the charge.

"Now, Mr. Murphy, you say there was no tobacco in that chest. Was that the *only* chest you ever took to Mr. Mundy?"

"It's not a word of a lie I'd tell yer honour; I did take another, and that's thrue for you, Sir."

"Oh! I thought so; and what did it contain?"

"Well, Sir, I can't exactly say. I know the other contained paper, waste paper, yer honour, for I packed it myself. It was all laves o' paper."

"But I am not talking of that, I mean the other—What did that contain?"

"Plase yer honour I can't give an evidence on that."

"Do you mean to swear you don't know what was in it?"

"I do, yer honour, 'cause I niver seed the contints."

"Didn't you hear what was in it?"

"No more nor what Masther Roughton himself said."

"Oh! now we're coming at it—And, pray, what did Mr. Roughton say was in it?"

"Well, plase yer honour, I heerd him say there was laves in it, and I consheinshusly belave there was; and shall I tell yer honour why?"

"Do."

"'Cause whin I'd took the first, masther says, says he, Pat, there's another box in the back shop, says he; go fill that wid waste paper, and take it to Misther Mundy's, says he; an' I did."

"But how does that prove that the other contained paper?"

"Why, doesn't yer honour be after seeing that masther was claning out his waste paper, an' one box following t'other; whin I know'd that I put the laves in one, and I'd heerd him say there was laves in t'other—why should I doubt it?"

"Well! I don't want to hear your reasoning; I want your evidence, or nothing."

"Maybe ye do; but didn't yer honour ax for it, and isn't it that yer honour sees I was just correctin' yer honour's ignorance?"

"Come, Sir, let me have none of your impertinence."

"Impertinence did yer honour call it, now? Faith, and beggin' yer honour's pardon, I meant not a bit of it. I thought yer honour didn't see through it quite as sharp as ye might, an' I take it rayther ungrateful I'd be found fault wid for insensin' yer honour."

"I tell you what, my man, you are doing yourself no good by this. You know more about this business than you are willing to admit, or I am wrongly instructed."

"I think so, too, ye are."

"Come, Sir, don't be flippant. I've no more questions to ask; but," with a significant glance at the jury, he added, "I shall not hand you over to my learned friend without observing that I would not believe you on your oath."

"Beggin' yer honour's pardon, I had a good caracther for spakin' truth till I made yer honour's acquaintance."

"Honest till I found you out, you mean. Remember it's a serious matter to trifle with the solemnity of an oath."

"It's yer honour put me in this box, and on that same oath; and if ye say I can't spake the truth, I take leave to tell yer honour, I can do that same betther nor yer honour's self."

"Go down, you saucy fellow," replied the barrister angrily.

"I beg yer honour's pardon," replied Pat, with imperturbable good humour; "but I'll take lave to make one little observashun before I go."

"I don't want your observations, Sir," retorted counsel angrily.

"May be not, but," pertinaciously proceeded Pat, "the observashun I was about to make's only jist this—If yer honour's thinking of takin' out a patent for impudence, ye needn't raigeste it, for ye'll niver find an imitator."

The judge attempted to rebuke the loquacious Pat; but

the court was convulsed with laughter, and his lordship, unable to escape the contagion, could not refrain from joining in it, with a vehemence almost derogatory to the solemnity of the judicial character.

Mr. Snubbs did not think it necessary to cross-examine this witness, or rather perhaps he thought it prudent to abstain, as matters stood very well; he, therefore, sat down with a wicked smile upon his rubicund face, and, with a sly grimace at the jury, said complacently—"I've no questions to ask him."

A short colloquy again ensued between the customs' solicitor and his counsel, in which the latter expressed some annoyance at such a case being put into his hands, and suggested a compromise.

"No," replied the solicitor, "as regards the case, you thought it a good one, and advised the prosecution before the information was filed, and its rather late to turn round upon me; but I maintain it's a good case. I am decidedly opposed to any compromise. Pray, oblige me by calling the next witness."

"Very well," retorted the counsel petulantly; "if the next witness breaks down as this fellow has done, I'll throw up the case;" but assuming an air of confidence, he called "Thomas Rice."

Thomas Rice made his appearance to the great discomfiture of poor Roughton, whose imagination conjured up the whole scene of his disaster with the *Crown*, embittered by the keen recollection of his folly in supposing that by satisfying the hard-hearted man's rapacious demands, he should secure his neutrality. He, poor man, expected the fellow was come there for the sole purpose of proving against him the transaction with the *Crown*, and of augmenting his loss by the additional penalties it would entail. Mr. Sharpe bade him not fear that, because that

was no part of the information they were trying. The counsel, however, proceeding with his case, handed up to Mr. Thomas Rice a small packet of bank notes, with an injunction to examine them carefully.

"Well, Mr. Rice, did you ever see them before?"

"I have, Sir."

"Where?"

"I received them from Mr. Roughton, chemist and druggist, Sir."

"What for?"

"In part payment for my ship, the *Crown*, Sir, which I lost through him."

"I believe, my lord," said the learned gentleman, "I cannot ask any questions about that; it relates, as your lordship may be aware, to another smuggling transaction, the subject of a further information against the defendant."

Harry's heart sunk within him.

"I object," said Mr. Snubbs angrily, "to such observations in the hearing of the jury, to the prejudice of my client. He has a good defence to that."

"Very well," replied the learned counsel; "I was merely explaining why I called this witness; it was simply to identify these notes, and show whence they came. I shall now proceed to trace them further."

Mr. Snubbs was silent, and evidently chagrined at the unexpected train of evidence looming before his astute legal imagination, and began in his turn to devise some pretext for an offer of compromise; but another witness was already in the box.

"Mr. Cashem, you are, I believe, manager of the Great Northern Provincial Bank?"

"I am, Sir."

"You have examined these notes; tell me what you know of them."

"They were paid, Sir, to Mr. Mundy, in exchange for a cheque of Mr. Builder, tobacconist, Leeds. I have the cheque here, Sir."

"Never mind, that will do. Have you any questions to ask?" added he, turning to Mr. Snubbs.

"No."

James Bullock was next called, and Roughton's hair stood on end as he recognized under that cognomen his ancient friend, old Jem.

The solicitor for the customs significantly whispered to his counsel—"What terms may I ask, if defendant is willing to compromise?"

"Compromise," retorted counsel; "absurd! there never was a clearer case, and compromises should never be listened to by the Crown. We must make examples in such cases."

The solicitor smiled, and turning to the papers before him, amused himself by sketching the judge on the back of a brief, whilst counsel proceeded to elicit from old Jem all the particulars of the case, step by step, drawing the net closer and closer round the unfortunate defendant.

Mr. Snubbs cross-examined old Jem with great astuteness, but made little impression. Wakeful, Smith, and one or two other witnesses, successively gave their testimony; and at length the learned counsel for the Crown sat down, observing, in a tone of confident satisfaction—"That is the case, my lud."

"It is now nearly seven, my lord," observed Mr. Snubbs, glancing at the clock; "I shall have, I fear, to address the jury at some length. I don't know whether your lordship may be disposed to sit any longer this evening—I may have many witnesses to call."

Ah! Mr. Snubbs—call witnesses! Full surely had he made up his mind to do nothing of the sort; but to stake

the chance of a verdict on an appeal to the jury. To prepare for this, the respite of a few hours was not to be despised; and delighted was he when the judge, rising from his seat, acquiesced, with a terrible yawn, in the suggested adjournment till the morrow.

In five minutes the deserted arena of wordy strife was as still as a charnel-house.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

“Why do we punish? Why do penal laws
Coercive, by tremendous sanctions bind
Offending mortals? Justice on her throne,
Rigid on this hand, to example points;
More mild, to reformation upon that;
She balances and finds no ends but these.”—DODD.

THE sun rose as usual upon the just and the unjust. The ninth stroke of the hammer of the great clock had scarcely ceased to reverberate, ere the almost deserted streets began to fill with people of all ranks and conditions, in carriages and on foot. It would seem as if everybody had agreed, by common consent, to break their fast and go abroad at the selfsame hour; and a superficial observer might have concluded that the minds of all who constituted the motly procession were animated by the same spirit and object, for all were bending their steps in the same direction, eagerly hurrying to the same place of rendezvous—the area in front of the great hall of the law courts; but a more astute observer of the human countenance would have discovered that, beneath the surface of this stream of human beings, notwithstanding the seeming concurrence of design in one particular, there were undercurrents of thought and feeling widely diverse in character, depth and intensity; and in the great majority of instances these inward emotions were strongly depicted in that tell-tale index of the heart, the human face.

The measured pace of the ponderous and slowly-moving vehicle, which contained the judges, appeared to be regulated by the gravity of its inmates. Preceded, followed, and surrounded by trumpeters, javelin-men, and sheriffs' officers, the cortege, glittering with gay liveries and halberds, conveyed to the vulgar eye what such solemnities are intended to impress—a character of dignity and importance, suggestive of the majesty of law; whilst the unconcern and indifference of the gay retainers, smiling with imaginary self-importance, provoked in the mind of the cynical looker-on a vague idea of hollow mockery. It had its attractions for the mob; men, women and children, with no inconsiderable display of rags, filth, and other evidences of squalid misery, formed a sad contrast to the gaudy cavalcade. Close upon the heels of these were jurymen, witnesses, plaintiffs, defendants, husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, sons and daughters of incarcerated criminals, and hundreds of others, attracted either by morbid sympathy, idle curiosity, or other undefinable motives. By the side of splendid equipages, whose occupants revelled in the excitement of the scene, and laughed and joked with as much apparent satisfaction as if they were going to a theatre, might be seen the dejected and careworn relatives of the forlorn inmates of dreary cells, which they might be about to exchange for exile or the gallows. Wigs and black gowns, clerks with blue and crimson bags, keen and eager attorneys, as well as anxious clients, might be seen flitting about here and there, holding short colloquies, or listening to flying commentaries on the coming events of the day.

In the midst of all this, though the ringing of the heartless bells, which announced the approach of the ministers of the law, rather detracted from the solemnity of the occasion, little groups of pickpockets and thieves were busily plying their trade under the eye, as it were, of the

executioner—making a harvest of crime out of the very institutions which were created to suppress and punish it. Candidates for a place in the ensuing calendar made their market of the miseries of the wretched beings who had only preceded them.

At length the great gates were thrown open; the judges and other functionaries proceeded to their respective posts; the portals of the hall devoured with ponderous jaws the rushing masses as they came, until the wonder was where or how they could be stowed away within the precincts of those walls; and yet that so much order and decorum should prevail throughout those densely-crowded courts.

Mr. and Mrs. Roughton rose after a night of sleepless anxiety, not much alleviated by the assurances of the subtle Mr. Sharpe that a verdict of acquittal awaited them. The exposure which they dreaded was, in his judgment, only a nine days' wonder, soon to be forgotten; and the verdict, if gained, a legal whitewasher.

They were speedily conducted to the place they had occupied on the previous day. Mr. Snubbs was already on his legs, twisting a bit of red tape round his fingers, and, ogling the jury with an air of confidence and conscious innocence, assumed to reflect the feelings of his injured client.

Silence was called, and he began in honeyed tones to address the court.

"May it please y'r ludship. Gentlemen of the jury—If I had proceeded with this case last evening, I should undoubtedly have called witnesses of the most respectable character and unquestionable veracity to rebut the case which my learned friend has, with the extraordinary skill and talent peculiar to himself, endeavoured to make out against my client; but, after a careful review of the evidence, I feel that I may safely leave the case in your

hands, with no apprehension as to your verdict, which must be one of acquittal, since my learned friend has so signally failed in making out a case; and yet, gentlemen, I am bound to say, in deference to his superior and matchless ability, that he has not failed from lack of skill or exertion, but because the materials with which he had to work were not such as could do credit to the most efficient master of the art in which he excels. By materials, gentlemen, I mean the testimony, I won't call it evidence, upon which my learned friend had to rely. Gentlemen, if the case of my learned friend had been supported by the uncontaminated evidence of honest witnesses, there could have been no doubt of his success; and, if perchance his efforts should in this case command that success, it will be due rather to the rhetorical ability of the advocate, than to the merits of his case. But, gentlemen, I feel that I may confidently rely on the nice discrimination which characterizes the special juries of this country, to distinguish between what is due to the advocate, and what to the value of the testimony upon which his argument is founded. It is perfectly true, gentlemen, as my learned friend told you in his opening address, that the smuggler is an enemy to the fair trader, a foe to the honest competitor in those articles of commerce on which the latter pays the duty; whilst, by his greater integrity, he disqualifies himself for competing with the fraudulent knave who evades those duties. It is true that the taxes which you and I, which every honest man must bear, are augmented by every illegal inroad upon the coffers of the Queen's exchequer. The smuggler is undoubtedly a pest to society. I am prepared to echo every word of my learned friend on that head; but, gentlemen, because we cordially acquiesce in all these abstract truths, does it follow that my client is that nefarious smuggler—that he is the dishonest competitor

of the fair trader—that he is the knave who, by fraud, undersells his neighbour—that he is the speculator who robs the Queen’s exchequer and entails unjust taxes upon us—that he is that pest of society whom my learned friend, no doubt with an eye to the character of his own witnesses, has so eloquently described—a character with which he so adroitly endeavoured to identify my client? No, gentlemen, it requires evidence to prove that. No one knows better than my learned friend how to captivate the judgment of the most astute listener, and to prejudice the victim he designs to immolate, by interweaving with his narrative commonplace truths, from which none can dissent, and, by the most delicate of all rhetorical artifices, to lead his hearers, whilst seemingly asking only a willing assent to abstract propositions, to involve his victim in the acquittal or condemnation which that unqualified assent would carry with it.

“Let us, then, gentlemen, approach the consideration of this question with dispassionate and impartial minds. Let us, if you please, start with a hypothesis the opposite of that with which my learned friend set out. Let us consider the defendant absolved from the gross imputation cast upon him, until it appears by the evidence, and not by the statements of counsel, that he is guilty.

“Now, gentlemen, what is that evidence, and how does it touch my client? If you give full credence to the witnesses who have been called on the part of the Crown, it amounts to this—a smuggling transaction has undoubtedly taken place, and that near a public road, on which my client, if you believe the only witness who says so, was seen about the time. A box or chest was conveyed from the premises of one tradesman to another, the former being my client and the latter a Mr. Mundy, who, it is alleged, but not proved, is a smuggler. In the common course of

business my client pays an honest debt, with notes honestly acquired—it does not appear from whom ; which notes, at some previous period, had, it seems, passed through the hands of Mr. Mundy.

“ Now really, gentlemen, this is the whole case against my client. I feel that I should almost be insulting your judgments, your keen perception of justice, were I to enter into any lengthened discussion upon a point on which I am sure, on consideration of the simple proposition I have just put, you must already, in your own minds, have given me a verdict. But, gentlemen, when I look at the atrocities with which the case for the Crown has been surrounded ; when I reflect upon the character of the witnesses, and the testimony they have given, I feel myself irresistibly compelled to denounce such a proceeding, and to hold up to public scorn and derision a set of men—I was about to say miscreants—who dare to enter that box, and, regardless of the solemnity of an oath, endeavour to fasten upon the innocent a crime of which they themselves have been guilty ; ay, most of them, directly guilty ! and the others, with a single exception, criminal participators. Gentlemen, it is a scandal to our courts, a disgrace to the Crown, an insult to the people, thus to attack the liberties of the subject under the sanction of law, and to select, even if he were guilty at all, the most innocent of the offenders to offer up on the shrine of perjury as a sacrifice—a scapegoat for the unscrupulous approver : the approver who purchases his own indemnity by basely fastening his crime upon another.

“ Gentlemen, it is not merely indemnity that these wretches secure to themselves as the price of their questionable testimony or treachery ; but such is the protection which the power of the Crown extends to these privileged individuals, that I could not be allowed even to ask how

much was to be given to them for their dirty work, nor whether it is in proportion to the success achieved, or the amount recovered, of which your verdict is the measure. I strongly suspect it is. As regards the officer, I know it is; for he is entitled by rule to a given share of the plunder secured. I trust, gentlemen, you will give them nothing. I have alluded to the officer, that precious specimen of official avarice, Mr. Cinderow; I will not dismiss him without a few observations. You saw him in the box, and you could not peruse that man's countenance without discovering, as I did, the wily ferret-like character which he so singularly exhibited during his examination. But what did he tell us? Why, hearing that a wholesale smuggling affair was to come off, in the darkness of a November night, on the dreary cliffs of Oldburgh, a run, as it is called, which implies the arrival of a ship with her boats and crew; the landing of a cargo of contraband goods; the guiding star or lantern of a spotsman to warn the ship of danger, or to assure her of a safe approach; the preparation and presence of vehicles and men to receive and cart away by land the illicit cargo brought by sea. What, I say, did he tell us? Why that, knowing all this, he quietly proceeded in a one-horse chaise to the scene of this assemblage of nautical desperadoes and of reckless land-lubbers, to seize and take out of their hands the fruit of all their clandestine toil. And this with no other aid than an inferior officer or boatman, unless we except that bright specimen of integrity, Mr. Swiveleye, and the youth, called Golightly, whom they have not dared to produce before you. And we are to believe, forsooth, that this was done purely, simply, and honestly, in the fair discharge of his duty, without fraud or connivance with the parties or any of them. Gentlemen, do you believe it? Why! What are the facts according to that man's own showing? It

was his admitted duty to invoke the aid of the coast-guard. On being asked why he did not, he replied, he had not time. Had not time! Yet, on cross-examination, he tells us that he learnt the secret of the run in town, ten miles from the spot, from a man who actually got to that spot in a heavy cart long before he did; and yet, although the coast-guard station was within gunshot, he had not time to give notice there. That, then, gentlemen, is obviously false; and if so, of what value is that man's oath? Would you convict a dog upon such testimony? But who was the man who preceded Mr. Cinderow in the heavy cart? We have it from the lips of both. The veritable Mr. Swiveleye—the owner of the smuggling ship! Ay, ay! Mr Cinderow. He would have had us believe that he did not know that fact. You observed how he shuffled and evaded the question, until constrained to admit that he knew Mr. Swiveleye was the registered owner of that ship; and, gentlemen, you know that, though it was his duty to seize her, that ship was not seized. Could these things be without direct complicity and connivance between those two men? Who, then, is the greater scoundrel? the man whose sworn duty it is to protect the revenue, or the miserable wretch with whom he connives to defraud the Crown, in order to secure the contemptible reward? I say the miserable wretch! for we had it from Cinderow's own lips that Swiveleye was too poor to purchase the ship of which he was the ostensible owner. It is, gentlemen, matter of curious speculation whence the money came that made an ostensible owner of a man whose next act is smuggling with that very ship, in concert with the seizer of her cargo, whilst she and her crew escaped unharmed. This brings me to the first point in Cinderow's evidence, which affects to touch my client. It will be in your recollection that my learned friend scrupulously avoided asking any

questions about my client's alleged presence on the spot; but it did not escape his lordship, in reply to whom Mr. Cinderow, for the first time, stated that my client was seen there. Now, gentlemen, I do not think you are bound on such evidence to believe that he was there at all; but, assuming that he was—Where was he? and what was he doing? Why he was on a public road in a little pony carriage, and had alighted at the gate across that road, for the purpose of opening and passing through it—a very natural circumstance: a respectable tradesman out on business in his own vehicle, not a very suitable equipage for smuggling, is seen upon the road, accosted by a customs' officer, and allowed to pass without let or hindrance; and, because it happens that that officer was himself engaged in a smuggling adventure hard by, it is to be inferred that the accidental traveller is a party to that transaction! Gentlemen, it behoves you and me to be very cautious how we take a drive in our own carriages, if our so doing may be tortured into evidence of our complicity with any rogues who may perchance be pursuing their nefarious calling in the vicinity of our route. Away with such stuff! If my client were there, it is an incident in the case of which my learned friend has made the most, and he is welcome to it. Of Mr. Swiveleye I shall trouble myself to say nothing. I leave him, his character and his testimony, as an admitted accomplice, to that estimate which you, as men of the world, know how to form of such a drivelling creature. But, gentlemen, I cannot find words adequate to the expression of the utter contempt I feel for that man who, as an officer of the revenue, should have done his best to repress fraud, but who has been the chief instrument in bringing about the crime which he has the audacity to come here and charge against my client. Having disposed of the allegation, whether true or false,

that my client was there, and shown how valueless it is, even if true, I now proceed to the episode of the chest, the magic box which found its way from my client's premises to those of Mr. Mundy. Yes, gentlemen, a box. A box containing what? Why, waste paper. A precious box, indeed, for my learned friend to get into. We have the particulars from the lips of his own witness. What do they amount to? My client, according to custom, was clearing out the rubbish and waste paper, which were valueless to him as a chemist and druggist, whose parcels, as you all know, are enveloped in white or fancy papers; he found a customer, perhaps for the hundredth time, in a retail tobacconist; and, because this particular box happened to be on that man's premises, and to have been made the receptacle for smuggled goods, we are asked to conclude that the metamorphosis which the waste paper underwent lies at the door of my client. Ah! gentlemen, but there was a card attached to that box. You could not fail to observe the great anxiety with which my learned friend sought to introduce that scrap of pasteboard to your notice as an isolated fact, shrouded in mystery, which was afterwards to be cleared up to your satisfaction; and to identify my client beyond all doubt with the fraudulent transaction alleged against him. And who was to do this? No other than Patrick Murphy, who proves that he was the bearer of that box, that he actually packed it himself, and that it was full of—of what? Leaves of paper, gentlemen! 'Oh! but,' exclaims my learned friend, when the ground slips from under him, 'is that the only box you ever took.' 'No.' 'I thought not,' said he; 'and pray what did the other contain?' The witness honestly confessed he did not know, except from what his master said. 'And now we're coming at it,' said my learned friend; 'and what did your master say?' Why, leaves of paper still! and

so they all turned out blanks to my learned friend, and he found himself in the wrong box again.

“ Now, gentlemen, I come to the only point in the case which gives the slightest colour to the charge made against my client. Certain bank-notes have been put in, and proved to have been received from the hands of my client. It was also shown by the only decent witness called, that, at some previous day, these notes had been paid into the hands of Mr. Mundy; and, we are asked therefore to jump to the conclusion, not only that my client received these notes direct from Mr. Mundy’s hands, but that he received them as the price of smuggled tobacco, and that that tobacco was not only supplied by my client, but that it was some of *the* tobacco which, in one or other of the runs spoken of, was landed at Oldburgh. Now really, gentlemen, this is too much; we are not to hang a man upon half a dozen presumptions, however ingeniously strung together by the smooth sophistry of my eloquent and learned friend. This, gentlemen, I must however confess was the only point upon which I doubted whether I should call witnesses; perhaps I ought to have done so, in order to show you how my client became possessed of those notes; that they did not come to him direct from Mr. Mundy, but from a totally different quarter, though, it is more than probable, they might have passed through half a dozen hands after they left those of Mr. Mundy, and before they reached my client. It would have been perfectly competent to me to rebut the presumption raised by such evidence; but, gentlemen, one presumption, which falls short of proof, is as good as another; and why on earth have we not as good a right to presume that my client got them in the fair course of business, as that he obtained them dishonestly, not having a tittle of proof to support such a violent inference. Gentlemen, I did not call witnesses,

not only for the reason I have just given, but because, taking the case as a whole, viewing the witnesses for the Crown in the light in which they alone can be viewed, as a set of contaminated witnesses, laying aside the banker's clerk; ay! all the others, the officer not excepted, were tainted accomplices, seeking not only their own security, but the reward of villany, by trumping up a case against an innocent man. An innocent man! I repeat it, gentlemen, as I believe it, and that innocent man is my client. Now I put it to you, gentlemen, even assuming that the little they have attempted to prove against him was true, have they not proved tenfold more against themselves? Have they not admitted that they were stained and double-dyed in fraud—prime movers and actors in every stage of the mysterious and clandestine transactions they have detailed? Do they not come here red-handed, steeped in crime, unblushingly confessing their own guilt, in order, by interweaving a few concomitant circumstances, in themselves innocent, to raise an inference that my client was *particeps criminis* in their offence? If, I ask again, if those circumstances were true, and some connivance could be inferred, is it not strange that the least guilty should have been selected to be victimized, on the contaminated testimony of the vilest and most treacherous of a desperate gang, headed and encouraged by the very man, of all others, who should have sought to suppress, and not to incite a breach of the revenue laws—of those laws which he was sworn and bound to respect and uphold? Gentlemen, have not those witnesses been convicted of falsehood before your eyes? If so, you cannot believe them at all, and my client is entitled to an acquittal. I appeal to you as men of business. I appeal to you as men of honour and of humanity; and, by the oath which you have taken, to give a verdict according to the evidence. I ask you to acquit that unfortunate man, whose

prospects will be mercilessly blasted, himself and his family ruined, and his character destroyed for ever; if, on the testimony of perjured villains and cowardly traitors you should consign him to a gaol, and leave him to the triumphant mockery of those wretches who, to secure their own indemnity, have remorselessly, sacrificed truth and conscience to his undoing. The liberties of the subject tremble in the balance. The eyes of England are upon you; the destinies of my client are in your hands; and I leave him there with no misgivings as to the result."

Mr. Snubbs sat down amidst loud cheers from the back of the court, but which were quickly suppressed. The counsel for the Crown, who had gone out of court whilst Mr. Snubbs was addressing the jury, was apprised by desire of the judge; but, having an important case in hand in the other court, he only stepped in for a minute; and, blandly observing that he should not avail himself of the Crown's right to reply in so clear a case, but would leave it in the hands of his lordship, bowed politely, and again withdrew.

His lordship very briefly summed up the evidence, suggested to the jury that they might safely dismiss from their minds very much of what had fallen from the lips of counsel, and confine themselves to the facts of the case, to which he would direct their attention. There was no doubt, observed his lordship, that two serious smuggling transactions had taken place, and that the circumstances related by the witnesses were substantially true, though, in some particulars, those witnesses did not come before the court in so creditable a manner as could be wished. In some respects their credit and character had been materially shaken by their own admissions; it was, therefore, important to look with great jealousy at their evidence as a whole. Nearly all the witnesses were tainted by their

complicity; nevertheless, they were confirmed in many material particulars, by evidence and facts over which they had no control. The first witness, certainly, had not appeared in a very favourable light; his own evidence almost went the length of an admission that if he were not in the strict sense of the word an accomplice, he was, for his own venial purposes, an abettor of the fraud, and had connived at the escape of some of the guilty parties, in order to secure to himself the whole advantage of the reward for the seizure; and, perhaps it was to be feared, to encourage, or leave them at liberty to pursue fresh frauds upon the revenue, in which he might participate, or, at least, secure to himself the reward due to legitimate detection and seizure. Be it so; this, however, only confirms the fact that the transactions alleged did take place, and, however disgraceful may have been the conduct of the officer, that does not exempt the other parties from the consequences of their participation. Nay, further, had it been distinctly proved in evidence, as a part of the Crown's case, that these nefarious proceedings had been carried on with the direct connivance of the officer throughout, this could not be set up by his accomplices as a legal defence. The question is, whether the offences alleged in the information were committed, and whether, as against the defendant, it is proved to the satisfaction of the jury that he was a party? Now, it is shown that these smuggling transactions did take place; that other tobacco than that seized by Cinderow was landed, and afterwards conveyed to various localities; and, amongst others, to the premises of Mr. Mundy, who appears in the capacity of a receiver of smuggled tobacco. It is proved that the defendant was, at a late hour of the night, near the spot where the run took place; and, beyond the ingenious explanation of his counsel, he has given no good reason in evidence for his presence there. It is shown

that two boxes or chests were about that time removed from the defendant's premises to those of Mundy, and that one of these was found there to contain smuggled tobacco. It is true that the rather facetious Irish witness called by the Crown, proved that one of these boxes only contained waste paper; that might be a blind to cover the others if inconvenient questions were asked; and, it could not escape notice that this man, evidently an unwilling witness and a partisan of his master, did not distinctly negative the fact that the other chest contained tobacco, though he most ingeniously raised such an inference—an inference, strongly rebutted, however, by the fact that tobacco was found in the chest bearing the defendant's name and address, and other words indicative of his calling as a druggist. Well, gentlemen, this point has been ably argued by Mr. Snubbs; and I must confess if the case rested there, I should strongly incline to recommend a legal acquittal; but then comes evidence of much more extensive transactions between the tobacconist and the chemist—whose trades have little affinity with each other—than the sale of a few boxes of waste paper would account for. Here are bank-bills traced to the hands of Mundy by the unexceptionable evidence of the banker, received from the hands of the defendant by a witness, whose testimony has not been impeached, and actually produced and identified here. It has been suggested by the defendant's counsel, that this is not conclusive evidence that the notes came direct from the hands of Mundy, though he once had them; but the Crown has gone as far as it could to establish *prima facie* proof of the fact, and it was for the defendant to rebut it by the simple and easy proof, if it existed at all, that the defendant derived the possession of those notes from another source. He has failed to do that, and it is for you to say whether or not you are satisfied that the defendant

was a party to this transaction, and if so, to find your verdict for the Crown. If you are not so satisfied, you will, of course, give a verdict for the defendant; and here let me observe, it is not for you to determine whether the defendant is the most or least guilty; it is not for you to try the measure of his guilt, but simply to say guilty or not guilty. Some of the accomplices may have shown themselves in very odious colours, but the Crown, no doubt, has its reasons for selecting which of the defendants shall be prosecuted. It may be there is more behind the curtain than has here transpired. If the defendant, moving in a respectable sphere and carrying on a profitable business, has employed these men *sub rosa* to do the dirty work for which he may have found capital—and without such men perhaps wholesale frauds of this kind could not be carried out at all—he may be the most to blame. I do not say it is so, but I only point out that it is for the prosecution to determine, in such cases, who to prosecute; and for you to say whether a case is made out against the defendant irrespective of other considerations. I will not conclude without observing that the conduct of the first witness appears to me to have been disgraceful; it will, however, be for the Crown to deal with its own officer according to his deserts; with that you have nothing to do, but only with the defendant. Consider your verdict, gentlemen.

The jury, without retiring, laid their heads together for five minutes, which to Roughton and his wife seemed an hour. The foreman turned round and said—

“Verdict for the Crown, my lord.”

The verdict was then taken in due form, the quantity of tobacco stated, and the amount of penalty, being treble the duty-paid value, adjusted. During this process poor Jane had swooned, and was carried out of court by her husband,

who, but for this new cause of excitement, would himself almost have sunk under the blow. A crowd of idlers swarmed around the poor woman in the great hall as she hung lifelessly on her husband's arm; and, beautiful though pale, she attracted the admiration of several gentlemen of the long robe, who not only sympathized but gave that assistance which the stolid mob never offered—a smelling bottle was presented by one, a cab called by another, whilst a third assisted Harry in conveying his half-revived but interesting charge to the vehicle, in which she was conveyed to her wretched temporary abode.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

“Why waste we time in vain?
See what effect our low submissions gain:
Liked or not liked, his words we must relate.”—COWPER.

“Woe to the wrong'd and the avenger! Woe
To the destroyer; woe to the destroy'd!
Woe to the dupe and woe to the deceiver!
Woe to the oppressed and woe to the oppressor!
Woe both to those that suffer and inflict!”—SHELLEY.

IN a little dingy apartment, at the back of an obscure public-house situated in the vicinity of the court, was assembled as forbidding a looking group as could well be imagined. They were seated round a table, upon which jugs and glasses, reeking with steam, sent forth a combined odour of gin, rum, and brandy, mingled with tobacco smoke. The principal personage of this very select party was no other than Mr. Pitt, who, although he had scrupulously avoided attracting notice during Roughton's trial, had contrived, from one obscure corner or another, to see and hear all that passed publicly, and, through the medium of his spies, to learn everything which had transpired privately amongst the principal actors, some of whom now surrounded him in the dirty back parlour which had been his secluded and *recherché* abode during the last three eventful days. Old Jem, Swiveleye, Smith, and Wakeful had each of them, for reasons best known to themselves, claims on Mr. Pitt which he could not ignore; and, the

trial being over, they had resolved not to separate until they had come to an understanding with their chief. He would have treated them with gin and water till they drank themselves blind, but that would not satisfy his satellites and accomplices in crime. Old Jem was the principal spokesman, and argued with much shrewdness that nothing less than £30 should satisfy him, and that the others should have £20 each. "Didn't we all agree with Lawyer Sharpe to drop every word that could pull you in?" said he to Mr. Pitt. "Didn't we agree to tell them Lunnun chaps what he set down for us, and no more—and didn't he say as you'd come down wi' some'at 'ansome, if we minded our p's and q's and kep' you clear, whether Mr. Roughton sunk or swum? aint we turned up trumps?"

Mr. Pitt listened uneasily to the bluff eloquence of the speaker, and, without affecting to deny the truth of his assertions, argued that Roughton was in for it anyhow, and he didn't see that there was any great matter to boast of, in their not needlessly betraying another of their own party.

"All very fine," retorted old Jem sulkily; "I don't want to peach agin nobody, but I don't see why you should get all the swag, an' Roughton, as you draw'd in, get all the 'prisonment, an' we, as kept you clear, get nothin'!" Here the others chimed in, backing their leader with no small clamour; under which encouragement the orator waxed warm, and bringing down his brawny fist on the table like a sledge-hammer, to the manifest danger of breaking half the jugs and glasses, which jingled in chorus, he swore with a tremendous oath, that he'd have £50 and the others should have £30 apiece. "If we are to go for it at all, we may as well go for a sheep as a lamb; and if you," added he, turning to Mr. Pitt, "if you don't come down wi' the dust to us, you shall pay through the nose to

the Queen, that's what you shall ;—and now, lads," addressing his companions, "stand by me an' we'll show him up fair, and get*more by the job than he seems disposed to give us. We know the way to the custom-house."

"We do, so we do, and we'll go," vociferated the others; upon which old Jem looked round with the air of an orator fully satisfied with the impression he had made, and added—"There now, there, that's my say; and now I'll shut up." With these words he magnanimously bottomed his glass, deposited the empty vessel on the table, and, with all the dignified resolution he could assume, thrust his hands into his breeches' pockets, drew himself up to his full height, and complacently gazed at his compeers.

Mr. Pitt did not like the aspect of affairs; he knew that old Jem was not the man to be trifled with, nor in the mood to be refused. He tried his arts of cajolery in vain, until the bright thought struck him that he might *buy* old Jem to *sell* the others! Drawing him into a corner, he suggested that he should give old Jem £60, if he would affect before his comrades to be satisfied with £20 for himself, and £10 for each of the others; and, having extorted an acquiescent wink from the veteran scamp, they returned to the table; when old Jem, with well-feigned sulkiness, observed—"There's a good deal in what you say; I didn't know as you'd stood the racket of this job for Roughton, an' that you'd made all right with Jimmey Cinderow. Well, I reckon we maun't be too hard on you, but I sha'n't tak' less nor £25 onyhow, an' you ought to stand £15 apiece to these 'ere chaps."

"No," returned Pitt, "I've honestly told you my reasons; I don't care a snap of the finger for you all; don't ye see ye're under my thumb? But I want to act fair and liberal—I'll stand £20 for you and £10 apiece for them—either take that or nothing." With these emphatic words

he walked out of the room, encountering Sharpe in the passage.

During Pitt's absence a warm discussion ensued, in which Jem persuaded his comrades to take the niggard at his word, or they might get nothing. He was their oracle, and they bowed to his advice. In the meantime Pitt had requested the lawyer to regale himself, at his expense, with a glass of grog at the bar, whilst he disposed of his ugly customers, as he called them, in the parlour; where, after a little further sham fighting between him and old Jem, the bargain was concluded, and beginning with Wakeful they were told off, and departed one by one with their £10 each, till Jem's turn came. No sooner was the room clear of the others, than Jem boldly faced Mr. Pitt, and in a resolute tone said—"I'm not going to be gammoned, and if you don't come down with half what I've just saved you, beside my £60, I'll blow you, and that's the fact. You know I can do it. Them twenty bales lie hid yet, and you can't put your hand on 'em without me; so £80, honour bright, or the game's up."

"Do you mean it?" asked Pitt.

"I do."

Burning with ill-concealed mortification Pitt told out the £80, and the two sharpers bid each other a sullen good-night.

It was now Mr. Sharpe's turn. Mr. Pitt speedily summoned him. They drew up to the fire, side by side. Pitt waited for his companion to break silence. Presently the lawyer whispered something in his ear at which he started, exclaiming—"£200! I can't stand it—out of all character—nothing of the sort—nothing of the sort, Mr. Sharpe; I'll die in a gaol first."

"Perhaps so," said the lawyer with provoking composure, "*I might* get more by that, eh? and this is grati-

tude, is it? you were lavish enough in your promises till poor Roughton was sold, at your bidding, beyond redemption; and now that's over and you *think* yourself safe, you repudiate what I've done for you? Be it so, and take the consequences; I'm content."

Mr. Pitt's countenance fell, and after brooding for a short time over the lawyer's pointed remarks, he rejoined—"Now you know, Mr. Sharpe, I heard every word, and there was nothing in the case to touch me."

"And who have you to thank for that?"

Instead of answering that question Mr. Pitt said—"Well, I don't want to be shabby; I'll stand £100 and make an end of it."

No, Mr. Pitt, I ought to have £500; and if you don't come down with £200, I leave you to take your own course, and I'll take mine." So saying, he rose and took up his hat.

"Nay, nay," said Pitt, "you're such a testy fellow you can't take a joke."

"Joke or no joke, Pitt, you know very well that if I hadn't handled those witnesses and made them up for the Crown as I did, at Roughton's own expense too, and no thanks to you, he might have been free now and money in pocket, and *you*, Mr. Pitt, in his place. *You* can't say I have not acted honourably, and if you don't choose to deal fairly by me, mark my words, you don't escape quite as easily as you flatter yourself.

"Well, well! hear me out: I was only going to say that, considering you've made a good thing out of Mr. Roughton's defence—and a nice defence you've made of it for the poor devil—I should have thought £100 from me would have been downright handsome, and yet you want £200."

"I don't wish to argue the point, Mr. Pitt. As regards making a good thing out of Roughton, you're out of it

there; he owes me at least £50 now. I am as sorry he was not acquitted as you are, and, if it had'nt been for saving you, he might have got off. You have to thank me for that, I tell you; but do as you like." Then, holding out his open palm, he added, in a bantering tone—"£200, Mr. Pitt, £200, or we are not quits."

Pitt heaved a deep sigh and drew out his cheque-book. The operation of filling up that scrap of paper appeared to be as agonizing a pastime as the drawing of a double tooth. At the conclusion of each word he wrote came another deep sigh; and when his name was attached to it, he threw himself back in his chair with the resignation of a martyr. "Now for a little peace," said Mr. Pitt to himself, as he closed the door on the pertinacious lawyer; "I hope I've done with these precious rascals." Having discharged himself of this comforting observation, he threw his feet upon the fender, folded his arms, and resigned himself to his meditations.

CHAPTER XXXV.

"And can it be? or is it all a dream,
A vapour of the mind? I scarce believe
Myself awake and acting. Sudden thus
Am I—so compass'd round with comforts late,
Health, freedom, peace—torn, torn from all, and lost!"—DODD.

OVERWHELMED by the severe shock which they had sustained, poor Roughton and his wife, a prey to the most heart-rending despondency, sat in mute grief over the dying embers of a little fire in the miserable lodging they had occupied during the last three eventful days. An ejaculation or broken sigh now and then escaped the lips of Mrs. Roughton, responded to only by exclamations from Harry, not very complimentary to those to whom they felt that the sad fate which had overtaken them was mainly attributable. They were neither of them yet in a frame of mind to hold an unbroken conversation, or afford any consolation to each other.

"An unfortunate finish," exclaimed Mr. Sharpe, as he unceremoniously opened the door and entered the room.

"Unfortunate indeed," replied Harry in a tone of poignant distress, as he raised his head from his hands, and fixed his melancholy gaze on the face of the intruder. "Very different to what you led us to expect."

"Well, well, my good friend, that's true; but remember it was your own fault; a man should never deceive his own lawyer. Why didn't you tell me about those notes?"

I might have got some evidence to prove that they did not come from Mundy to you."

"But they did come from *him*," replied Roughton pettishly.

"It's no use arguing that now," retorted the lawyer. "I had some notes from Mundy myself not long since, and, if I'd known ten days ago, I could have exchanged them with you, and have sworn that I paid them into your hands, without being very particular about the numbers. With a little mystification about the dates and figures, we could have raised a mist about it, so as to claim the benefit of the doubt; but it's too late now. What I want to know is, what has Pitt made by this job? I suppose he's had the lion's share?"

"No doubt," replied Harry, "he has made a little fortune out of it, and yet he wouldn't lend a hand to save me;" for again Harry's thoughts reverted to the night on which the notes were thrust on *him*, the villanous advice the fellow gave him whilst he was rejoicing in the possession of the "gold that tells no tales," and his refusal to give bail for him when captured by Cinderow. Sharpe saw that Harry's countenance lowered at the very name of Pitt, and, being the last man to lose an advantage, he laid his plans accordingly, observing—

"The object of my visit, Mr. Roughton, was to ask whether it is convenient to you to settle the balance of my account?"

"The balance of your account, Mr. Sharpe! why, you know you have had every shilling I could rap and ring together. I only wonder what's become of it, and I can't conceive how I can owe you a farthing; and, if I did, I wonder you should come to me, a ruined man, on the very night of a disaster against which you pledged yourself to hold me harmless. You know that in less than a month I

must either flee the country or be consigned to a goal for those enormous penalties which it seems the law trebles against a—a—smuggler."

"But only reflect, Mr. Roughton. If no more had come out than you told me, you would have been acquitted. It's not my fault; I did my best; and when I come to sum up the expenses of witnesses, counsel's fees, inn bills, &c., I see that I am fifty pounds, hard cash, out of pocket; and, after all I have done, surely you do not wish me to be a loser."

"I wish no man to be a loser by me, Mr. Sharpe. I always did pay my way honestly, till—well, it's of no use; I can't pay, and there's an end of it."

"Oh! I see you mistake me altogether. I know *you* can't find the money, but I know *who* can."

"Know who can?" interrupted Harry. "I haven't a friend in the world who would now advance a shilling?"

"Perhaps not; but you *may* have an *enemy* who can."

Roughton looked at the lawyer with inquisitive incredulity.

"Who drew you into this mess, Mr. Roughton? How is it that you are the scapegoat of a set of traitors? Who has schooled all the witnesses to suppress even what might have served you, in order to screen himself? Ought he to escape? No, Roughton. I wish to serve you, but I am hampered. You know I cannot afford to quarrel with a good client; but, keep my name snug, and I'll tell you how you can force him to make some reparation."

"But what are you driving at, Mr. Sharpe?"

"Why, to tell you the truth, I was driving at my bill; and when I turned the whole matter over in my mind, reluctant to press you at such a time, it occurred to me that you might get double the amount out of him, and so

pay me, and have £50 left to procure some comforts for yourself and Mrs. Roughton while you are in prison, if it comes to that. Just write him such a note as I will dictate, and stick to him. Take my word for it you'll get the money. Threaten to inform against him and the receivers. He can't stand against that."

"Mr. Sharpe," retorted Harry, "if I had taken the rector's advice instead of yours, I should have done that before I was ruined, and have saved myself. Now it's too late you recommend it."

"No I don't," said Sharpe. "I don't recommend you to inform; only threaten. Now, just permit me to let you into a secret, and I think you won't be so squeamish. Did not you observe when old Jem and Swiveleye and Wakeful were pressed in the witness-box to name their accomplices, how carefully they evaded naming Pitt, but did not let you off so easily? I could not understand that, knowing as I did and as you did, that while they were playing the double game of witnesses for the Crown, they were schooled by me, and promised to keep *you* clear, and what they were to say as Crown witnesses was to tell double for *you*; yet none but Pat Murphy kept his word."

"I see no secret in that," said Harry bluntly.

"No, no; I'm coming to that. What I say is, I couldn't understand how your own witnesses, as one may say, played false to you and saved Pitt. But, would you believe it, this very night as I was passing the Blue Posts inn, who should I see slinkin' in there but those very men! so I watched 'em in and then took a seat in the bar, where, over a glass o' grog, I pumped the landlady, and got out of her that Mr. Pitt occupied that room, and had been there for two or three days; and the waiter told me afterwards that there was a good deal of money passing between 'em. That was enough for me; so, thinks I, that's the

direction, until his eye fell upon a rapid walker in a blue coat and red collar, with a bundle of letters in his hand ; he kept his eye upon him until he had reached the domicile of Mr. Pitt, executed his commission there, and strolled off again. Not to appear too precipitate, he amused himself by watching the door of the public-house for about a quarter of an hour ; during which interval, that he might not attract notice, he affected to be scrutinizing the books, pictures, engravings, and caricatures in the window of a neighbouring stationer's shop.

"Well," said he to himself, "he hasn't left the inn since the letter was delivered ; I have given him law enough—What excuse shall I resort to for dropping in ?" Scarcely had he concluded this reflection ere he saw the very man, with flushed face and scowling brow, pass quickly into the street, and march off at a hurried pace towards the very spot at which the lawyer was standing.

Mr. Sharpe instantly reapplied himself with apparent earnestness to the examination of the prints, and, as if unconscious of the approach of any one, he burst into an affected fit of laughter at a droll caricature.

"Hallo, Sharpe," said Mr. Pitt, "you seem to be very merry this morning.

"Bless me, Mr. Pitt," said the lawyer, with well-feigned astonishment, "who'd have thought of seeing you here ? I was amusing myself with this caricature ; just look here."

"Curse your caricature," replied Pitt ; "I'm in no humour for laughing."

"Nothing gone wrong, I hope—these are ticklish times—what's the matter ?"

"Matter enough, read that," growled Pitt, as he drew Roughton's letter from his pocket, and handed it to Sharpe ; "curse the vagabond, I hate traitors."

Mr. Sharpe took the letter, read a few lines, raised his eyes in astonishment, read them again, as if to be assured that he had not misunderstood them, uttered several ejaculations of surprise as he proceeded, and, at last, said—"Confound the fellow; who could have expected this from such a chicken-hearted fool as that? I tell you what, Pitt," added he, returning the letter, "some scamp or another has been tutoring him—I don't half like it. Those revenue harpies have been at him. He must be muzzled, or worse will come of it. Let's see—what did he say he required?"

"Required, the scamp! why, £200; can't you read?"

"I beg pardon," said Sharpe, "but I was so taken by surprise—I was thinking so much more of the consequences than the money, that I had hardly given any attention to the amount."

"Consequences! What consequences? What have I to fear from a convicted scoundrel like that?"

"Oh, nothing! but to have to pay all the penalties or change places with him, and he'll be grinning through the bars before long, if he don't play a deep card; and that would'nt be very pleasant."

Pitt's cheek blanched at the prospect placed before him; he paused, his colour came and went, he breathed hard, then stamped his foot and swore with frantic vehemence.

Sharpe tried to quiet him, and at length succeeded, by reminding him that hedges and walls have ears. Pitt seized Sharpe by the arm, and marched back with him to his inn. Sharpe begged to be excused, avowing that he was only waiting an appointment nearly due; Pitt would have no excuse, but forthwith dragged the lawyer into his room, and before they had time to sit down, demanded—"What's to be done?"

"Done?" replied Sharpe; "stop his mouth."

"How?"

"Buy him off, make the best terms you can; offer him half, and if that won't do, give him *all*. It will be cheapest in the long-run. Can't you see him at once?"

"No! I'll never speak to him again. It won't do, Mr. Sharpe. I refused to bail him when he was quodded."

"Oh! I'm sorry for that, Mr. Pitt," said Sharpe; "that's a misfortune. That explains a good deal; but it's no use talking; get some mutual friend—some one, mind, who is already in the secret; too many know already."

"Why can't you do it?"

"Well, you see, I've pressed him for my bill, and you see how he speaks of me in that cursed letter. Hang the cur, I could strangle him; but I treat his lying abuse with contempt. He can't hurt me—I'm privileged. But think of some one else, Mr. Pitt; pray do."

"I can't trust nobody, without it's Cinderow; I'll ask him, we're hand and glove."

"A good thought," said the lawyer, "he's the man! No, stop—that won't do neither—I forgot; Roughton loves him as the devil loves holy water. He arrested him you know, after leading him into the last scrape and promising to screen him; nobody can convince Roughton that Cinderow couldn't help himself in that affair."

"Well, that's true; then *you must* go, and there's an end on't."

"Mr. Sharpe hesitated, and at length replied—"I don't half like it, but I can't see a friend at a fault, and no time's to be lost. Give me his letter. Have you got the cash?"

Here again Mr. Pitt uttered a tremendous oath, and seemed more resolved to retract than conform; but the wily Mr. Sharpe wormed him round, worked upon his fears, obtained a cheque for £100, and cash for £100 more,

promising to 'bate Roughton down, if possible, but not to return without securing his pledge of secrecy.

"I'll have it in black and white, Mr. Sharpe," said Pitt emphatically.

"Better not, safer not, Mr. Pitt, for you," said Sharpe, though thinking only of the difficulty which Pitt's determination might throw in the way of his own selfish designs; but, Mr. Sharpe was fertile in expedients, and, relying on his ingenuity, he acquiesced, and started on his mission.

"I've been called in as I expected, the business is done," said Mr. Sharpe, as he entered Roughton's room and threw down the cheque; "but he will have an acknowledgment, an acquittal, in exchange." Harry's eyes sparkled at the sight of the money, but Mr. Sharpe proceeded—"I've had a hard job to squeeze that out of the old scamp—you have to thank me—I know you have cash by you, and I presume you will settle my bill; that's the least you can do."

Jane interposed her advice in favour of Mr. Sharpe, observing that both justice and gratitude dictated compliance; whereupon Harry counted out £30, and promised to send the balance when the cheque was cashed.

"Now for the memorandum," said Sharpe, and he wrote—"Dear Sir—In acknowledging the £100 which you have kindly advanced to me, I feel it to be but just to you, for fear of any misconception, to state that you are free from all imputation of guilty participation in the unfortunate business which has led to my prosecution.—I am, &c.

"Can you sign that, Harry?" said Mrs. Roughton; "I would not write a falsehood for all Mr. Pitt's gold!"

Roughton threw down the pen, and Mr. Sharpe snatched up the cheque, saying—"Do as you please; I can't leave this without—my honour is at stake."

Some modification of the words was contrived by Mr. Sharpe, which, without telling a direct untruth, would

serve the purpose. Mr. Roughton signed and gave it to Mr. Sharpe; who, first calling at his inn on the way just to turn the £100 into £200, proceeded to assure Mr. Pitt that Roughton was inexorable, as that memorandum would show; and Mr. Pitt sulkily stowed it away in his pocket-book, cursing the whole band as a set of knaves, in which Mr. Sharpe piously joined.

"Is that a full and undeniable acquittal to me?" asked Mr Pitt.

"It is," replied the lawyer.

"Roughton can't do anything against me as long as I hold this?"

"Of course not—at least, if he should attempt it, you know it will furnish you with a full answer, and he wouldn't be believed on his oath."

"You're quite sure I'm safe?"

"No doubt of it."

"Then I know my course," triumphantly observed Mr. Pitt, and wishing Mr. Sharpe good-day, he sat down and wrote a note to his banker.

As soon as Roughton was in a position to visit the bank and present the cheque he did so; when the officiating clerk behind the counter politely apprised him there were no assets to meet that cheque. Harry was thunderstruck, and on pressing his inquiries as to when he should again present it, and whether it would be honoured, the clerk distinctly assured him that it would not; Mr. Pitt having ordered not only that it should be dishonoured, but stopped; and the clerk quietly laid it in the drawer. Poor Roughton, after standing aghast for a moment, dropped his head and retired in the most pitiable state of anguish—anguish so intense and so mortifying, that anger was supplanted by despair. Sharpe too had got his last £30, and Roughton, almost penniless, was

without a home, and being penniless, was without the means of redress, even had the law afforded him an opening in a case not only fraught with suspicion in itself, but, being based in antecedent fraud, unexplainable without reverting to that which must condemn it.

The only hope left was that Mr. Sharpe, who, as he conceived, was at least an innocent party to this cruel deception, might set it right. He durst not return to Jane until he had tried this expedient. Screwing up his courage, he presented himself at Mr. Sharpe's office, and fortunately found him there.

The revulsion of feeling had by this time made him desperate. He announced the result of his application at the bank without preface. Mr. Sharpe was taken aback at the sudden intelligence, and mistaking Harry's look of blank despair for sullen and settled determination, he knew not where it would end. Regaining his self-possession, he said—"Pitt is a greater scamp than I thought. Take back your £30. If you never get any more, I cannot retain it, Mr. Roughton; take it—though I may lose it. I'll do what I can, Mr. Roughton, to mollify the scoundrel; but, if he will not repay the money, I will never ask you for that £30 again, but treat your debt to me as cancelled."

Harry, overpowered by the frank generosity of his legal friend, and thinking of his wife and children, grasped his hand with fervent gratitude, ejaculating with tears in his eyes—"God bless you, bless you, Mr. Sharpe."

Even Mr. Sharpe felt a pang of remorse as he witnessed the emotion of poor Roughton, and bade him be of good cheer; but his sincerity was momentary, for he added—"If I don't succeed, Mr. Roughton, never breathe a word of this; I should not like the world to know how, in the guilelessness of my heart, my confiding disposition has

been imposed upon. It would not do for the world to think a lawyer could be so fooled."

Harry gave his promise, with an affectionate farewell; and in another hour Mr. Sharpe was closeted with Pitt. After rating him soundly and swearing he would expose him, since, as he said, his own honour was at stake, he succeeded in obtaining a note to his banker authorizing him to cash the cheque to the bearer, Mr. Roughton's solicitor. Of this authority Sharpe soon availed himself, and strutted out of the bank rubbing his hands in an ecstasy of delight, as he muttered to himself—"Better than bargain; I hardly anticipated such luck as bagging £170 out of the old rascal's £200." In high good humour with himself, and with virtuous integrity, he sat down immediately on regaining his office, wrote a kind note to Mr. Roughton, assuring him of his sympathy, giving him a full discharge for the balance of his bill, and begging him to retain the £30 as a proof of his sincere condolence!

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"See they ope

Their iron jaws! See the vast gates expand,
Gate after gate—and in an instant twang,
Closed by their growling keepers. When, again,
Mysterious Powers! Oh! when to ope on me?
Mercy, sweet Heaven, support my faltering steps,
Support my sickening heart!"—DODD.

WE must pass over the short period of misery and suspense that intervened between the trial and the issue of execution against the defendant. He did not avoid the process, because he well knew he could not discharge his debts, except through the intervention of the court; and that he could do nothing for himself and family until that millstone was removed from his neck. He had retired with his wife and little ones into very humble lodgings, and husbanded his £30 as carefully as he could. Twenty pounds of this still remained; when one evening, as he sat by an economical fire, with his wife and children around him, a knock was heard at the door; the latch was raised and the rude visitor unceremoniously entered before they had time to answer the summons. "Muster Roughton—if I'm not mista'en?" said the forbidding-looking intruder.

"My name's Henry Roughton, if you want me."

"The same, Sir—at your service—you'll please to come along wi' me."

Long as they had been prepared for it, when the moment arrived Jane's heart sunk within her, and she burst into

tears. With childlike sympathy the little ones crowded round the mother's knee and wept, they knew not why.

"No use blubbering ma'm," said the officer; "you'd better shut up—it dunno' sinify to me, I'm used to it; but it ony mak's them as isn't wuss, and spiles the partin'."

"Let him remain to-night, my good man," cried Jane imploringly; "he will go with you in the morning; indeed he will."

"By no manner o' means," replied the man; "it can't be done nohow. This consarn a'n't bailable. It's a hexecution, an' no mistake; an' I mun do my dooty; so come along, old feller, you'll be used comfortable."

Notwithstanding the man's rough exterior, he evidently was not a hard-hearted man by nature, and Jane obtained a respite of an hour, to make arrangements for Harry's departure; whilst the man quaffed a jug of ale and smoked a pipe in the chimney corner, with the perfect composure of a man not unaccustomed to such scenes, having merely taken the precaution of putting the outer-door key into his coat-pocket. At length the parting came. It is needless to dwell upon the harrowing scene between the wretched, but affectionate husband and father, and his devoted wife and loving little ones. The only consolation was that Jane should follow with her children, and lodge in the vicinity of the gaol; she having learned with melancholy satisfaction that she would not be precluded from visiting him and ministering to his comfort in prison.

Mr. Roughton at length found himself the solitary inmate of a prison cell, about ten feet long by six feet wide, possessing, however, one recommendation, cleanliness: for its walls were certainly well whitewashed, emblematical of the condition, perhaps, of the preceding occupant, and of that which Harry had now to anticipate; but when the happy moment of discharge would come was all involved

in mystery. He surveyed at leisure the little furniture of his dreary abode. A narrow iron bedstead and a straw mattress occupied one side, a deal table the other, and a solitary chair stood between them. The window was just large enough to admit light and air, when opened; but its scanty panes were disagreeably crossed by iron bars, which gave a depressing character to the place, suggestive as they were of the loss of liberty, so dearly prized by Englishmen. Seated on that solitary chair, and gazing at the window which so dimly admitted the light of heaven, with his arms folded across his chest, Harry Roughton, for the first time, felt what it was to be a prisoner and alone. He revolved in his distracted mind the events of the last few months, which crowded on his thoughts like the busy phantoms of a dream. The more he dwelt on the hardships he had undergone, and the more he reflected upon the character and conduct of the chief actors in the drama of frauds, the more he became convinced that he had throughout been made the dupe of a set of designing scoundrels, whose friendship was only coextensive with the prosperity of their victim; and that, in the moment of adversity, they were the worst of enemies. Treachery and hypocrisy were clearly traceable in every step of their course. Vying with each other in protestations of friendship and sympathy, they had contrived to lead him on, in a hopeless defence, that they might offer him up a victim to the law, and by betraying him procure their own freedom. So long as he was at large, and in communication with these wretches, he had not been allowed time for cool reflection, but had been led on by delusive hopes, which it was their interest to feed. Doubts of Sharpe's integrity began to take forcible possession of his mind; and, the more he indulged in these reflections, the darker grew his suspicions, which involuntarily mixed themselves up with Pitt, until he became lost in surmises as to which was

the greater villain—Pitt or the lawyer. As his memory recalled fact after fact connected with these men, a sort of mental agony oppressed him; self-abasement, remorse, revenge, by turns racked his soul; and in the bitterness of his heart, he cursed their duplicity, and his own credulity. He tried to banish these distressing thoughts, but his more violent emotions only gave place to dark and gloomy despondency. While thus absorbed, the door opened, and Jane, with a beaming smile upon her face, entered the little cell. Her presence was like a ray of sunshine bursting through a cloud; he sprang to his feet, and, despite the presence of the gaoler, they were instantly locked in each other's arms.

"Well that's him, ma'am, and no mistake," said the guardian of the ward, as he shrugged his shoulders and retreated, jingling his keys.

The first burst of emotion having subsided, as many questions followed on both sides as if they had been separated for months; next came a review of the slender accommodations afforded to the prisoner, to which, with a woman's tact, a variety of convenient additions were contrived, and Jane's management of old Cerberus secured their introduction before the gates were closed for the night. Saving that *he* was a prisoner, and *she* free to go, she left him with more comforts than she had provided for herself in her miserable lodging, of which, however, she had spoken to him in such glowing terms, that he felt little present uneasiness on her account. Throwing himself on the bed which had been superadded to the mattress, on which he had in vain sought slumber the night before, he fell asleep with feelings of sufficient satisfaction to give a pleasing colour to his dreams. Alas, poor Jane! her only remaining bed was devoted to her little ones. Her couch for that livelong night was a rickety twig-bottomed chair,

in which, with a mind distracted by a hundred cares, it would have been a wonder had sleep visited her tearful eyes. Jane held in her possession the last remnant of their broken fortunes; but few pounds remained of the thirty, which had evoked a blessing on the crafty lawyer's head, when fear of exposure prompted him to that act of seeming generosity. How were those few pounds to be doled out, so as to pay her lodging, maintain her children, and provide daily comforts for her Harry, whom she could not suffer to live on gaol allowance, so long as she had a shilling in her pocket? How long was his incarceration to last?

CHAPTER XXXVII.

“ Oh ! I have cause to curse my life, my being ;
To curse each morn—each cheerful morn that dawns
With healing comfort on its balmy wings,
To ev’ry wretched creature but myself :
To me it brings more pain and iterated woes.”—*Rowe.*

“ Patience, accomplish thy labour ;
Accomplish thy work of affection ;
Sorrow and silence are strong, and
Patient endurance is godlike.”—*LONGFELLOW.*

As the dawn of another morning approached, poor Jane, after a weary and sleepless night, overcome by fatigue, sank into a lethargic reverie, a sort of waking dream ; in which, though physically inert, her mind was busy with a thousand distracting thoughts. She had not the energy to rouse herself, until the grey dawn of morning peeped in through the lattice, and her children began to show symptoms of wakefulness, after the long sleep of early innocence so often denied to those of riper years. Her baby uttered a faint unconscious cry, to which a mother’s ear, however insensible to other signs and sounds, is ever quick. Springing from her uneasy chair, and suddenly gazing around, she almost wondered how she came into that dull strange apartment. She felt for the moment as if in a dream ; chilled and comfortless, she could scarcely shake off the drowsy feeling which benumbed her frame and confused her senses. Another and a louder cry, acting like a talisman,

recalled her to consciousness ; the illusion vanished ; realizing her own hopeless misery, she flew to her children, and sought to divert her melancholy by soothing attentions to the little waking darlings. Their innocent smiles threw a gleam of sunshine on the dreary scene. Having washed and dressed them, she occupied herself in preparing their morning meal, but ever and anon came the anxious thought —“How long shall I be able to secure even such a simple repast as this?” The needle she considered her only resource ; and, however hard the task might be, she resolved to seek employment until Harry regained his liberty. Even this thought cheered her ; and no sooner was breakfast over, than she hurried off to gaol to inquire after the well-being of her incarcerated husband. She found him up and dressed, but pale and melancholy, sitting in his chill and lonely cell. Some coffee she had brought with her was soon smoking on the table, and delighted was she, concealing all her lassitude and grief, to join him in that meal and cheer his desponding spirit. In reply to his inquiries how she had passed the night, she readily replied —“Oh ! I have a nicer bed than you, Harry, so you see how selfish I am ;” but she did not add that that bed had been devoted exclusively to her children, nor did he suspect her gentle words. When she left him for a few hours, her duty to her children was a satisfactory plea for her absence, though in reality much of that time was spent in search of work, which she obtained in small quantities. Her time was divided by these occupations of love and duty, and so the days wore on ; but all her laborious exertions, at the miserable prices she could secure, afforded but a meagre and precarious addition to their little stock. At the end of a few weeks, Jane saw that it would shortly be beyond her power, either to contribute to her husband’s comforts, or keep herself and children out of the workhouse. These

apprehensions preyed upon her spirits; she was no longer able to maintain her wonted cheerfulness in his presence, or to bear up against the trial that awaited them; her cheek grew pale and wan from anxiety and severe abstinence, nor was Roughton insensible to the change. At length she was obliged to confess the truth, for she had none to consult but him as to what they could do. Despair, mingled with the hope that joint consultation might lead to some practical suggestion, induced the confession from Jane, that her funds were rapidly failing, though she meted out her daily expenditure with the painful economy of the starving boat's crew on the wide ocean. Was there no chance of putting an end to this ruinous imprisonment? Harry's once resolute determination to die rather than turn informer began to falter. Although he might have had courage to hold out for years upon the pauper pittance of a gaol, were he alone concerned, he could not endure the anguish which Jane's emaciated form excited in his mind, nor the evasive and dubious answers he received to his ever anxious inquiries about his little ones. They, alas! were also suffering from privation to which they had formerly been strangers; and Jane's daily struggles to maintain composure in Harry's presence, were only succeeded by heart-rending grief, as she returned to her wretched lodging to contemplate the pallid, sickly features of her once rosy, laughing children.

Though sad was the lot of the suffering wife, still there was an indefinable something which sustained her in the most trying moments. Even in the darkest hour a faint spark of hope glowed in her breast, and she cherished it with a confident fidelity. Through the clouds of sorrow and uncertainty which hung around her, she saw with the eye of faith the dawn of a brighter day, and often, almost unconsciously, did she turn her eyes heavenward and utter

an ejaculatory prayer that her fond dream of hope might speedily be realized. It was this habitual pious constancy, this heaven-derived patience and fortitude, that supported her through trials under which many of sterner mould would have sunk. She felt that it was her part to do and to suffer, in humble submission to the divine will; and, having marked out what she conceived to be the line of duty allotted to her, she resolved to pursue it to the end.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"'Tis she, 'tis she! my weeping, fainting wife!
And hast thou, faithful, found me? Has thy love
Thus burst thro' ev'ry barrier? Hast thou trac'd—
Deprest in health, and timid as thou art—
• • • Trac'd the desolate wild street,
Thus, in a prison's gloom, to throw thy arms
Of conjugal endearment round the neck
Of thy lost husband?"—Dodd.

THE hand of affliction weighed heavily upon poor Jane. Night after night, as she consigned her children to their humble couch, she knelt upon the mattress she had provided for herself and poured out her sorrows in earnest prayer, from which she never rose without relief. But it was only that mental consolation and inward confidence, which resignation, faith, and hope impart, amidst the darkness and gloom of earthly desolation. No change of outward circumstances furnished any visible sign that her prayers were heard. Such was the case as she rose one morning from her knees, and, having partaken with her sickly children of their scanty repast, hurried off to visit her immured husband. Everything around her wore an aspect of misery and depression, a thick fog filled the streets, the very teams plying through the thoroughfares moved lazily, and the passengers looked listless and spiritless as they glided through the murky atmosphere, jostling each other, apologizing with little more than an inarticulate growl, or an ungracious nod. These were all strangers to

the solitary woman, who felt that there was nothing left to her but her children, her husband, and her God; yet, despite all surrounding circumstances, she felt a lightness of heart she could scarcely explain, as if some flickering hope, however intangible, were dawning through the gloom. With these feelings she approached the outer gate of the heavy prison walls, when her ear caught the sound of a well-known voice within, urging some earnest petition on the gaoler.

"Och! now, but don't ye see he's after bein' a kind frin' o' me own, and I the like to him? It's five words I'd jist spake to him wid ye'r honour's lave, and a blessin' rest on ye for that same."

"Can't do it, man, without an order," returned the gaoler. With these words he threw open the gate, and, with his keys jingling in one hand, he beckoned towards the street with the other; but the man was immovable until he caught sight of Jane, presenting herself for admission.

"Heav'n be preessed!" he exclaimed; "it's right glad am I to see your own swate self, though by the Powers I'm cut to the heart to see ye wid that pale face o' yer own. It's sorrow enough ye've had I see, and may heav'n lighten it for ye."

"Why, Pat!" said Jane, "is it you my faithful friend?" and she extended her thin trembling hand; but Pat, warmhearted as he was, and despite her change of circumstances, felt the same intense respect and admiration for his former mistress, now that she was in poverty and misery, as he had done in happier days; so, instead of taking the proffered hand, Pat reverentially took off his hat, gave a respectful tug at his forelock, and exclaimed—

"The Lord bless ye! If it's fire and wather I would have to go through to sarve yer swate self, Pat Murphy's

the boy to do it; an' if it's badly off ye are, I won't offend ye by the gift of it, but here's a thrifle I've saved, an' let me lend it ye, and wish ye bether days to repay it me agin; an' if that's niver, Pat Murphy 'll be none the poorer for that same." With these words, Pat held out a dirty canvass bag in which a few sovereigns jingled. Jane, bursting into tears, turned to the gaoler and implored that the dear kind-hearted man might be allowed to see her husband. Old Cerberus himself was softened; and, with a short grunt of assent, beckoned them to follow, as he strode up to Harry's cell, where he left them to free communion with the prisoner.

A long story had poor Pat to tell. The first kind greeting over, he seated himself at the corner of the bed, drew from his capacious pocket a bottle of whisky, and, having respectfully presented it to his old master, he ran over the history of events since the trial with his accustomed volubility. Old Jem had not been sober a single day until about a fortnight before; when, having spent his ill-gotten gains, and being mad for drink, as Pat expressed it, he had made an attempt to rob a cottage in the country, and got caught in a trap of his own making. Jem having cut a hole in the shutter and introduced his arm to remove the bar, the master of the house, who had overheard him and watched the proceeding from within, slipped a noose over his wrist, and drawing the other end tight over a hook above, had secured him there; then, having satisfied himself that the burglar was alone, had ventured out and kicked from under the delinquent an old tub on which he stood, leaving him suspended by the arm whilst he fetched the parish constable, to whom he consigned him. So poor Jem was waiting his doom at the next assizes. Lawyer Sharpe had been detected in some fraudulent transaction, which had led to the search of his house and an examina-

tion of his papers, from which it turned out that, in addition to other frauds, he had received from the respectable Mr. Pitt and his bankers several hundred pounds, obtained on the evening of the trial, as well as other sums on account of other persons, which he had coolly applied to his own use; constituting in Mr. Pitt's, as in other cases, a charge of obtaining money under false pretences.

Roughton's ears tingled at this recital, as the whole story of the lawyer's manœuvres on the night of the trial rushed back on his recollection. "And what," asked he, "has Pitt done to the scoundrel?"

"Och! faith," replied Pat, "nothin' at all at all; his pashun was big at first, but second thoughts bein' best, conscience or something got the masther of his spite, and no persecution he'd follow on the poor divil, said he; but it's not so chicken-hearted are the others that he has done out o' their money; so it was to prison wid him at onst, and I heerd they're goin' to strike him off the roll, I think they call it."

Harry's curiosity was excited by Pat's narratives. He could not cease questioning him until he had learned the whole history, as far as Pat could give it, of his late accomplices. Wakeful had disappeared about the same time that old Jem was caught in his own trap; and ill-natured folks would have it that he was concerned in that affair, because he happened to be seen running at the top of his speed from the vicinity of the cottage, to the shutter of which Jem had become a temporary fixture. Marsloops had obtained his discharge, as some people would have it, because he had given an ample deposition of facts relating to various contrabandists by whom he had been from time to time employed, and pledged himself to come forward and prove them when required. It was strongly suspected that these disclosures somewhat damagingly affected Mr.

Cinderow. Poor old Swiveleye had been set at liberty on his giving evidence for the Crown against Roughton ; but he was suffering the most abject poverty as well as bitter disappointment ; the latter, because he could not obtain from Cinderow his reward as an informer, for the best of all reasons, *viz.*, that, in consequence of the figure he made on the late trial, the observations of the court, and other disclosures which had been made, the customs' authorities had not only refused to pay Mr. Cinderow the usual share of the proceeds of his seizures, on which Swiveleye relied for his reward, but had placed it beyond hope by the dismissal of that officer from the service, whilst sundry rumours were current of prosecutions for fraud and conspiracy, to the serious discomfort of that officer. Mundy was at large on bail, but looking forward with trembling anticipation to impending notice of trial, the result of which would probably reassociate him with his former friend, Roughton, as an inmate of the same dwelling. Yet all this time Pitt was still free, but grumbling at losses which he declared had ruined him.

"And the end of all this is," said Jane, as she drew breath at the close of Pat's recital, "that what is done in a corner is sure to be made manifest—fraud cannot prosper with any in the long run. At all events those who escape detection and public retribution, suffer in mind, body, and estate. Some are overtaken sooner than others, and perhaps it is well for them ;" and, turning to Harry, she added—"and I am sure *you* will never lend yourself to such wretches again after this severe ordeal is over." Here Jane paused as the thought crossed her mind—How long is this to be endured ? and she burst into tears.

"Swate lady now," exclaimed Pat, "don't be afther breakin' the mather's heart that way, nor afflictin' your humble sarvint nayther. It's no good, belave me ; tears

won't wash away prison walls; though, as the recther said but yesterday, there's a way out o' this presently; an' it's that partly brought me here now."

"And have you seen him?" asked Jane eagerly.

"And what is the way?" inquired Harry in the same breath.

"Tell the whole story," replied Pat, "and no reser-vashun. Show how ye've been led into this, and who are the varmint. Justice demands it, says the recther; an' most especially, said I, justice to yer honour; and the recther said, amen."

"But how is it to be done?" demanded Harry.

"Faith! don't ye see that all the scamps that 'ticed yerself in dhrew themselves out by 'peachin', an' got well paid for it into the bargain, though they've made ducks and dhrakes of it? No matter for that; what's got over the divil's back they say is sure to go—the divil knows where."

"But how is it to be done?" repeated Harry, "seeing that I am a prisoner and have missed my opportunity. Honour wouldn't let me impeach the scoundrels who have one and all betrayed me, and now I'm ruined."

"Well, that's thrue, every word of it; but yer honour knows a grate dale, which maybe 'twould ha' bin bether ye shouldn't ha' knowd; but that's nayther here nor there. What I mane is, ye know the gen'lm'n that rig'larly resaved that same 'baccy, and the whole workin' o' that hole and corner business, more's the pity for you; but that same informashun might be worth more to yer honour now than Misther Pitt's gold."

"That's probably true enough, Pat; but here I am cooped up within these four walls. How could I give this information if I would?" said Harry sorrowfully.

"By yer lave, I was jist goin' to spake of that same. Don't ye see? the recther says as how the revenue solicitor

would take the thrubble to go to yer honour, as yer honour can't go to him; or, lasteways sind a clerk at onst, if ye'd jist let his honour know that ye'r ready to make a clane breast on it; an' the recther says, barrin' this last job that bro't ye here, he'll give you a caracter, wid a letter of interducshun to his honour."

"Do, do," cried Jane, emphatically, "take the rector's advice; think of your children. I don't ask you to care for me, but think of those little ones, whom I have left this morning to see you, when I ought to be nursing them; think—"

"Are they ill?" interrupted Harry, in a troubled tone.

"They are ill," said Jane; "I have not told you how thin and sickly they have become, as I would not give you fresh cause of anxiety so long as it could be concealed; but they are ill, and for their sakes, Harry, do, do, do follow the good rector's advice."

Roughton buried his face in his hands, sighed deeply, and at length exclaimed—"Go Pat, my good fellow, go to the rector, thank him for his kindness to his unworthy parishioner, and bring me the letter. It will be time enough to decide then."

"I'll write to him myself," said Jane.

"Go to the dear children," said Harry; and she and Pat, taking an affectionate farewell of his old master, left Harry to ponder once more over the worth of that dear wife, and the kindness of the rector.

Pat Murphy accompanied Mrs. Roughton to her humble domicile, renewed his acquaintance with the children, and deplored not a little the painful contrast between this miserable abode and the comfortable home from which his master's indiscretion had driven them. Most of all did Pat lament over the loss of the roses which formerly blushed so deeply on the dimpling cheeks of the little ones, and

more faintly though healthily on those of their mother. All exchanged for lilies, and those of a sickly hue! He forbore to comment on the change, and affected not to see it, that he might not add another pang to the poignancy of that grief which was evidently undermining her strength. Having penned a hasty note to the rector, she delivered it, with many cautions, to the faithful Pat, who had volunteered to bear it to its destination. Bidding each other a kind farewell, Pat went off at the top of his speed to the railway station, and the pleasure of a long ride in "the parliamentary"—a very inappropriate term to apply to Pat's carriage on this occasion; for sick at heart the poor fellow could not summon up spirit to exchange a word with his companions either on his own or the opposite benches.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

“When the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illumines the pathway,
Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in darkness;’
And thereupon the priest, her friend and father-confessor,
Said with a smile,—‘Oh, daughter! thy God thus speaketh within thee.’”

LONGFELLOW.

“Injustice swift, erect, and unconfin’d,
Sweeps the wide earth, and tramples o’er mankind;
While pray’rs to heal her wrongs move slow behind.”—POPE.

AMIDST all Jane’s trials and miseries, faith and hope were never entirely strangers to her breast. She looked through the clouds and darkness of sorrow and care with a consoling confidence in the supreme disposer of events. Two weary days had passed over since she despatched her note to the rector. Jane was seated by her humble fire, with one of her children on her knee, pondering over her present woes, yet cherishing bright hopes for the future, when she was suddenly aroused from her reverie by a sharp double-knock at the door. Up she flew in an instant, and received with trembling hand and beating heart a letter, in the superscription of which she recognized the handwriting of Mr. Jamieson. It evidently contained inclosures, but she almost feared to open it, from the dread of those reproaches to which their recent backslidings had deservedly exposed them. She feared lest the feelings of her husband, who was eager to hear the result of Pat’s mission, should be wounded by the rebukes of his former friend and much

revered pastor. Having broken the seal, she opened the letter; she devoured the contents with eagerness. The epistle ran thus:—"I know full well that the sin lies not at your door, at least that you were not originally a consenting party to the unhappy transactions which have brought you and your children into misery, and consigned your husband to a gaol. I am willing to entertain every possible excuse for him, who has fallen a victim to the rapacity and treachery of evil men, by whose arts of deception many persons of previously good repute and of no mean intellect have been led astray. I know the fascinations by which those artful men have too often practised upon the young and inexperienced; and I would not willingly say one word to aggravate Mr. Roughton's sufferings or yours, since the severity of the law has asserted its rights, and visited him with punishment, which, sooner or later, overtakes those who blindly as well as wilfully stray from the paths of rectitude. Still, were I to say I do not blame him, I should neither be truthful nor faithful. Had he confided in me when I proffered my humble advice, he might have been spared much of that misery which has overtaken him; but it was not to be; and, I am bound to believe, that for some wise and merciful end his heart was hardened, though it is difficult for our finite minds to realize the justice of visitations which involve, in the same abyss of wretchedness, the helpless and innocent family of the offending one; but the ways of the Omniscient are inscrutable and past finding out. It is sufficient for the believer to know that *our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* May this be your lot, and may your husband come out of this fiery ordeal chastened and improved in heart. I feel for him as for one who for a time did run well, but being tempted fell away; though I trust the germ of better

things is not eradicated, and that he may return to society a reformed character, and experience that there is yet a blessing for those who eschew evil and learn to do good. He has my prayers, earnest as your own, and I trust that he neglects not himself to look up to the throne of grace, without aid from whence his future is a blank. And now to business; I inclose a note addressed to the solicitor of Her Majesty's customs. Let Mr. Roughton send that, with a message to the effect that he is ready to disclose, without reserve, all he knows of the recent disgraceful transactions, to which he owes all his griefs and sorrows. If I mistake not, he will receive a visit from that gentleman, or some confidential agent; but remember—candour and truth, or nothing! Let him ponder well before he acts, not forgetting to seek divine guidance in his meditations, and I am fully persuaded that he will not only do right, but reap a rich reward. Wishing your hearty success, I subscribe myself your sincere friend,

J. JAMIESON."

Jane read and reread the letter with palpitating emotion; and, with a pure-hearted woman's energy and resolution, determined to lose no time in conveying the good rector's communications to her husband. Her spirits felt lighter than they had done for many months, and, notwithstanding the impoverished position in which she stood, would have been happy for the moment, but for the melancholy foreboding with which she ever and anon contemplated the pale emaciated features and lack-lustre eyes of her eldest and once blooming child. Indeed, they all betrayed symptoms of impaired health, and many a bitter pang wrung that loving mother's heart as she gazed on them; but her firstborn wore an aspect of suffering agony which bespoke some deep-seated enemy within. Every glance from that child's confiding but gentle eye sent a chill through the fond mother's frame; still her attentions must be divided

between the prison cell and the sad domestic hearth; and, having ministered as far as she could, to the comfort of her little ones, she sped with contending emotions to lay before Harry the rector's letter, and conjure him to pursue the course recommended. She did not, however, approach her husband without some misgivings as to the view he might take of the suggestion to divulge, without reserve, the whole story of fraud and crime which it was in his power to lay bare.

"Well! Harry," said she, with a tone of well-affected cheerfulness, as she entered the barred chamber, "here is a kind letter from the good rector; it gives me hope, and I already begin to fancy you at large again, and happy in the bosom of your family. Do take his advice."

With these words she placed the letter in his hands. Eagerly watching his countenance whilst he read, she trembled as a cloud occasionally flitted across his brow. She spoke not, but let him finish and even reperuse the epistle, or parts of it several times. His eyes still rambled over the lines, resting here and there, whilst the furrows of intense thought deepened on his forehead. He at length laid down the letter in visible agitation, wiped the perspiration from his face, and exclaimed with unusual vehemence—"Jane, I cannot do it, I would rather lie and rot in gaol; this involves the exposure of all who have been concerned directly or indirectly in these unhappy transactions—receivers as well as smugglers; I can neither brook being taunted with the opprobrious epithet of informer, nor purchase my own liberty by the ruin and destruction of half a dozen others, and—and—Jane, they may have wives and children too!"

Jane was pale with agitation and alarm; but, step by step, she armed herself with arguments to overcome his scrupulous objections to impeach his deadliest enemies, the

disturbers of his peace, the destroyers of his fortune. She felt that the tempter was a greater criminal than the dupe, that the receiver was worse than the smuggler himself, and that her husband, having been betrayed by those who had led him into sin, was at full liberty to retaliate without shame. But when he hinted that his partisans in crime might have children, she paused, as if overcome by those generous feelings of humanity which sometimes usurp the place of judgment, even where the bias of self-interest tends the other way. The revulsion of feeling, of which impulsive natures are most peculiarly susceptible, came to Jane's relief. "Children!" said she to herself; "have not we children?" Rising from her seat with a mind made up to the course she would pursue, she bade Harry an affectionate adieu, cautioned him to make no rash vows; but, as duty called her home for half an hour, implored him to wait for her arguments.

With the letter lying before him, the prospect of liberty on certain terms, the odium those terms involved, the misery and discomfort inseparable from rejection, the incertitude of its duration, the primary causes of his ruin and incarceration, the treachery of those in whom he had confided, these and ten thousand other thoughts flitted through his brain, and racked him with a degree of anguish not easily conceivable by those who have not experienced so trying an ordeal. He longed for some friend to consult and advise with. Jane was gone, for the present at least, and even were she there he felt that her judgment was not free. "Oh! that I could have one half hour with—" Here the names of half a dozen former friends crossed his mind, with, however, the simultaneous reflection that they were friends no more. His disgrace had isolated those who would have stood by him had not his misfortunes been the offspring of crime. He stood alone. Mechanically raising his eyes, he

gazed upon the iron bars which separated him from his fellow-beings, and obscured the very sunshine which cheered the beggar in the streets. Freedom never wore so inviting a mask as when viewed through those odious staunchions. He longed for liberty; but, with a morbid repugnance, sickened at the terms offered to secure it. Again he paused, and at length exclaimed—"Truth can purchase it, and is truth grown so unpalatable that my tongue refuses to give it utterance? Yet in this alone I discover the key to those gloomy gates which stand between me and—" Whilst he was thus soliloquizing the door opened. Jane presented herself, leading gently by the hand their sickly firstborn. Roughton turned and started as if an apparition from the grave had risen to affright his bewildered senses. Staggering back a pace or too he exclaimed—"Can that be little Jane?" and in a moment he rushed forward, seized her in his arms, overwhelmed her with passionate caresses, and then burst into tears.

"That," said Jane in a measured and melancholy voice, as she threw herself into a chair, "that is the strongest argument I have to offer Harry! I know you will not see your children pine and die rather than do an act of justice. Self-immolation may savour of great firmness of purpose. I would share your cell and die with you rather than give you pain, though I think you wrong. But between us and our children, Harry, you shall be the judge. Take your own course, I shall not upbraid you. For better or for worse I am ever yours; as to our children I can give them little more than our prayers now; our little stock is well-nigh exhausted, though I have earned eightpence a-day by needle work to eke out our scanty means."

Harry heard every word she said, though he never withdrew his eyes from the pallid cheek of his little girl until Jane had finished speaking; then, mournfully raising his

head, his first impulse was to upbraid that suffering patient woman for not having sooner apprised him of what she and his children must have suffered, but which the silent eloquence of that pale, wan, and sickly visage so forcibly revealed. A moment's reflection checked the rebuke which hung upon his lip. He felt that consideration for him had made her endure it all herself; and, in tones of affectionate entreaty, he faltered out—"Jane, will you—may I ask you—will you see the solicitor? Will you yourself convey the rector's note to him? Will you go to-day? My mind is made up; I shall not shrink come weal come woe; I must return ere long to you and to my little ones. If they perish in this crowded city I shall not forgive myself! We must remove. May heaven hear our prayers and send us speedy deliverance."

Jane spoke not, but withdrew the child and took the note. Harry watched them with deep emotion as they left him to his harrowing reflections, and to that solitude which now seemed tenfold more unendurable than ever. He felt the chastening hand of God weigh heavy on his conscience-stricken soul. His stubborn knees bent under him. With hands clasped, in an agony of mingled remorse and hope, his spirit, humbled and subdued, rose from the dreary, dismal cell, the dark abode of earth, to the bright portals of the throne of grace.

CHAPTER XL.

"Methinks I see hope's lamp rekindled bright,
A living lustre; shedding, like the sun
After thick mists, illumination's smile
O'er all my countenance, marr'd, dimm'd, and wan."—Dodd.

WELL and faithfully had Jane, with beating heart, found her way through the mazes and windings of that heavy monstrosity of architecture, the London custom-house; where, after ascending flight after flight of granite steps, and traversing a maze of passages and corridors, dark as Erebus, leading everywhere, yet seeming to lead nowhere, she found herself face to face with the Cerberus who guards the precincts of the solicitor of Her Majesty's customs. Her timid inquiries for that functionary were briefly answered. In a few minutes she was introduced into a spacious room, where she found herself face to face with that gentleman. Much depended on the result of this almost dreaded interview. Poor Jane felt her position an embarrassing one, but was soon relieved from all anxiety on that head; for the solicitor, whom she had expected to find an incarnation of official dignity and cold reserve, was the first to break the silence. Politely requesting her to take a chair, he inquired kindly after her husband, and what had brought her to the custom-house. Upon which Jane, instead of replying, burst into tears. The rector's note was produced and handed to the solicitor, who read it through twice, and then, laying it down before him, said—"Mrs. Roughton, it is no pleasure to me to prosecute

persons who offend against the revenue laws. It is a painful duty, sometimes very painful, as in this case, to be the instrument for vindicating the law. It would appear that Mr. Roughton is desirous of making every reparation in his power, by disclosing all he knows of the smuggling transactions which have led to his imprisonment. When proceedings were first commenced against him, he was supposed to have been the principal offender—the originator of the scheme—the person who found the capital for the venture. Subsequent investigations have induced the belief that it was not altogether so, but that he was led into it; in fact, the dupe of others. If he is now prepared to take a step in the right direction, the probability is that the commissioners of customs will, particularly after the assurances of Mr. Jamieson, receive it in a favourable point of view.”

These observations and the obviously kind and frank tone in which they were conveyed, gave encouragement to the poor feeble woman. Hope lighted up her pallid features as, with the one prevailing thought upon her mind, she eagerly asked—

“Do you think, Sir, if my husband would tell you all about it, he would be set at liberty?”

There was such an expression of earnest anxiety in Jane’s countenance, such an eager pleading look, such a depth of true womanly feeling in her tone and manner, that the solicitor felt pained to say anything which might blast her hopes; but he could not make the promise she was so eager to obtain. After a moment’s pause he said—

“I hope, Mrs. Roughton, all may come right yet; but I must tell you that anything your husband has to communicate, may, perhaps, have to be used in evidence; and I can receive no statement from him unless given quite unconditionally. Let him be frank and honest, tell me

all he knows, and leave the rest to me. When a man, particularly one who may have been the unwary dupe of others, is desirous of taking the proper course, I can assure you that the commissioners are willing to lend a favourable ear. They have no vindictive feeling against individuals. It is a pleasure to them to encourage men when disposed to return to the paths of rectitude. I can say no more; but, as I understand your husband is prepared for the interview, tell him he shall see me or one of my confidential clerks to-morrow morning, when I hope he will have the good sense to throw off all reserve and mental evasion. At present you will excuse me saying more, as I am very busy."

Jane rose, retreated a few steps, hesitated, advanced again, paused, and observing that the solicitor's look was not repulsive, she ventured timidly to say—

"I have three little children, Sir; they were all well and healthy when my husband was taken; they are now all ill, and the eldest I fear is dying—the result of severe privation. Do, Sir, do, if you can, do something to free him."

The tears rolled down her cheeks; in vain she tried to suppress them, as she rivetted her eyes with an inquiring gaze on the solicitor. It was enough to melt a heart of stone. With a nervous twitching at the contents of his snuff-box, and a somewhat choked utterance, betraying some emotion in spite of himself, the solicitor replied—

"I'll do my best. Good morning."

With a curtsey and a blessing Mrs. Roughton withdrew; and, as she closed the door after her, the solicitor muttered to himself—

"Criminal prosecutors ought to be made of cast-iron;" adding with singular incongruity—"Confound the smugglers; I wish they were all hanged."

It was with no little trepidation that Roughton listened, on the following morning, to the approach of a stranger's footsteps up the stone staircase which led to his solitary cell. The whole of Jane's colloquy with the solicitor had been repeated by her again and again in her husband's eager ears. A hundred inferences had been drawn from the words to which that gentleman had given utterance; but, in spite of Jane's assurances that he was a kind and unrepulsive man, Harry could not help shrinking from the ordeal of the searching examination which he expected he should have to encounter. At length the door opened. The solicitor introduced himself; and in five minutes the two were engaged in a free and animated conversation which lasted for a couple of hours.

During this colloquy the whole history of the smuggling in which Roughton had been mixed up was discussed; and, to his surprise, the facts and circumstances, as well as the names of the parties concerned, appeared to him to have been as fully known to the solicitor as to himself.

"Well," said the solicitor, "having heard your story, I may as well make a few memoranda whilst the facts are fresh on my mind." Drawing a roll of paper from his pocket, he availed himself of Roughton's pen and ink for the purpose of committing the narrative in a succinct form to paper. In a very short space of time he bespoke Mr. Roughton's attention, whilst he read over a statement, drawn up in the shape of a deposition, which, to the astonishment of Roughton, was correct in every particular; whilst, from the consecutive order of the details, notwithstanding the incongruous and disjointed manner in which they had been elicited in a two-hours' desultory conversation, Roughton saw at once, and he reddened as he realized the fact, that a complete chain of evidence was established against half a dozen guilty parties, whom

he had never dreamt of making the subject of prosecution. He could not, however, deny the truth of the statement, nor to refuse to affix his name when the solicitor handed him the pen for that purpose. With a promise to prefer an application to the board for the favourable consideration of Roughton's case, the solicitor retired, leaving the prisoner in a state of astonishment at the extraordinary effort of memory which his interrogator had exhibited in putting together his rambling statements.

So little did he think, whilst talking the subject over in the way he had done, that such was the solicitor's mode of arriving at information, that he had once or twice set it down in his own mind as idle preliminary gossip, and wondered that he did not proceed to business. On revolving in his mind the communications made by the solicitor relative to his accomplices, he could not help realizing in those disclosures unequivocal evidence of that retributive justice which sooner or later overtakes the criminal. He felt this most strongly in the case of Pitt, with respect to whom, he learnt that a large portion of his ill-gotten gains was represented by a handful of parchment and papers, handed to him by his bankrupt friend, former associate, and legal adviser, Isaac Sharpe, to whom he had intrusted his money to place out on mortgage. Having duly received all interest on his loans through that worthy limb of the law, he entertained no suspicion as to the validity of the title-deeds, until he found that Sharpe had spent the principal, and that his mortgage securities were mere forgeries. Nor had Pitt's last speculation been more favourable. Notwithstanding the heavy advances he had made at the close of Harry's trial for securing his own immunity, relying on the realization of the value of the large deposit of tobacco, not only for reimbursement but profit, he had the mortification to learn that old Jem had

sold it, and then betrayed the purchaser! and that the old vagabond, as if to add to the chagrin of the relentless Mr. Pitt, was, by the operation of law, placed beyond the reach of personal vengeance, having by his untoward attempt at burglary been caught in his own trap. This accumulation of losses had completed Pitt's ruin. As Harry dwelt on these things he became more reconciled to the course he had been induced to take. His heart grew lighter despite the infamy which, in a worldly sense, he still felt to attach to him as an informer. Brooding over these things he longed for the return of his wife, that he might commune with her, and relieve his overburdened mind; but she came not. Hour after hour passed away, and, as evening approached, he was lost in perplexity as to the cause of her non-appearance. Solitude became more irksome than ever, after the dreams of speedy liberation which he had indulged in in the morning. A prisoner and alone, he had no servant at command to despatch to his wife, in order to solve the mystery of her absence. Could any accident have overtaken her—was she ill—was she detained by the bedside of one, or all, of their sickening children? The last thought weighed heavily on his mind as he retired to a sleepless couch, from which he only arose in the morning to learn that his fears were verified.

CHAPTER XLI.

“As once I wept, if I could weep,
My tears might well be shed,
To think I was not near to keep
One vigil o'er thy bed—
To gaze, how fondly on thy face,
To fold thee in a faint embrace.”—BYRON.

“GOOD heavens, Jane, how pale you look! What is the matter?” exclaimed Roughton, as his wife entered his cell shortly after breakfast.

She made no reply, but sank into a chair and gave vent to a flood of tears; whilst Roughton sought by every means in his power to console her. As soon as she could compose herself sufficiently for the painful task, she explained to her husband the cause of her unusually long absence from him. On arriving at home after she last quitted that cell, she found her eldest child rapidly sinking. The hand of death was upon her, and the little sufferer herself was fully aware that a fatal change had taken place.

“Do not weep, mother, but I am dying,” faintly murmured the helpless child. “I am going to a happy home; pray do not grieve for me; give my fond love to my dear father, and tell him God will be my only father now, and you will come to me there;” and she turned her still bright eyes heavenward.

Jane could scarcely speak from overpowering emotions—emotions such as mothers only feel when contemplating the

failure of the silver cord which links the evanescent spirit of the child of earth to its tenement of clay. Despite her grief a holy calm came over that doating mother, as she dwelt upon her dying daughter's words, and felt that the lessons of piety she had assiduously sought to instil into the minds of her children had not returned unto her void. How much it softened the pang of those parting moments, to feel that one so young had realized in her tender mind the full force of a Saviour's love; that saving faith was as manifest in the last moments of this dying little one, as in those of the most matured of God's saints on earth. Everything was done that a mother's love could do, to alleviate the pain and soothe the dying hours of her darling child, whose pillow she watered with her tears; though her own heart told her that it was a sin to grieve over the transit of an immortal soul from a world of woe and sorrow to those heavenly mansions, where tears shall be wiped from off all eyes and sorrow be no more. Poor Jane sought relief, in this hour of trial, from that source whence only true consolation comes. She was strengthened for the duties she had to fulfil, witnessed the departure of the last spark of life from the pallid but beautiful form, whose countenance still wore that serene aspect which almost deceives the beholder into the belief that it is "nature's soft restorer—balmy sleep," and not the icy touch of death, that seals the portals of the soul. Having discharged the sad offices which precede the removal of all that is mortal to the tomb, Jane hastened to break the mournful tidings to Harry, and hence the exclamation with which he greeted her reappearance at the prison.

He listened with mute attention to Jane's broken narrative; but, despite every effort to stifle the reproofs of conscience, his accusing angel still held the mirror to his mind's eye, and he could not but see in the retrospect it



P. 302.

The icy touch of death.

1

2

3

4

5

presented, that, humanly speaking, this new weight of affliction was traceable to his own folly and self-will. This conviction added tenfold to the intensity of his grief. Roughton had been carefully brought up by respectable parents, whose example had early inspired him with a reverence for sacred things. His moral conduct, until he fell into the hands of Pitt, had been irreproachable. He had indeed been regarded as a religious man, and so far as externals were concerned, there was little reason to impeach his sincerity. Regular in his attendance on divine worship, prompt in the furtherance of every good work, whether for educating the poor at home, the support of the missionary cause abroad, the maintenance of Sunday schools, or the promotion of public charities, the minister of the parish at all times calculated on his cheerful aid. Roughton's heart, however, had never really been warmed by the power of divine grace. He rested on his own strength, trusting in his own righteousness; and, when the hour of temptation came, his strength became weakness and his righteousness of no avail. He succumbed, and, striving against his own convictions, fell deeper and deeper into the gulf of sin. Though racked by remorse and buffeted by despair, repentance found no place in his breast, until the hand of affliction fell sorely on him, when a terrible awakening from spiritual torpor came. Glimpses of hope and consolation, from that source to which his faithful wife lost no suitable opportunity of directing him, at length broke in upon his troubled soul. His long incarceration, his bitter experience of the instability of all things human, had chastened his obdurate heart, but had not entirely eradicated the evil. The announcement of the death of his daughter, whilst he, a prisoner, was unable even to take a last farewell, overwhelmed him with terrible anguish. For a moment his spirit rebelled; but, as he gazed on the pale and emaciated

features of his calm and patient wife, reflected on the trials she must have endured, from the pangs of which she had so considerably exempted him, his stoicism failed, and he wept bitterly. His dying child's last message to him, the assurance breathed by those infant lips of the certain hope of a blessed immortality, sank deep into his heart. He longed ardently for the peace which she had so happily attained; realizing for the first time the saving efficacy of a firm and humble reliance on the Redeemer. "My child," at length he exclaimed, "my departed child has saved me;" and then he sank into deep thought.

Jane, after a short pause, reminded him that the funeral must be cared for, and desired to learn his wishes. Their means were scanty, and Jane, on seeking for her purse, could not find it—it was nowhere to be seen. In vain she searched her pockets, her work-bag, and her little basket. Her purse with the two pounds ten shillings which it contained, the last portion of her scanty means, was gone! She knew it was in her possession when she quitted her melancholy home. Suddenly she recollected that, on attempting to cross a crowded thoroughfare, some one had politely assisted her through a throng occasioned by an accident in the street, and that the stranger had as politely bowed to her and disappeared when she set her foot upon the causeway, without giving her time to thank him for his courtesy. She became convinced that his officious aid was less disinterested than she had imagined, and that her purse was past recovery. This was a new and unexpected blow. Roughton and his wife gazed at each other in utter hopelessness. What was to be done? In the midst of this a sharp rap announced an arrival; they both started as the door swung on its hinges, and the bulky form of the good-natured gaoler obtruded his rubicund face.

"Bless me, what on airth can be the matter? Nothing

new gone amiss I hope," exclaimed he, as he gazed at the sorrowful countenances of the unhappy pair. Roughton explained their sad position. The gaoler entered into their feelings with warm-hearted earnestness, expressed his sincere sorrow, and suggested, that in such a case he could put them in the way of getting a decent allowance from the parish for the funeral. They instinctively recoiled from the suggestion. Harry relapsed into a momentary repining at the decrees of Providence, which robbed him of his child, of the means of consigning her respectably to the tomb, and of the opportunity of following his lost one to the grave.

"Well," said the gaoler, "I dunna know; I'll think about it, but you'd better look at this here letter," which all this time he had held between his thumb and finger. Harry seized it with impatience, though he had not the slightest notion whence it came. He read—"The solicitor of customs requests Mr. Roughton to call upon him on receipt of this note." Roughton trembled, as he read it again and again, and, in a fit of strange bewilderment, exclaimed—

"Is it a mockery? How can I, a prisoner in these dreary walls, comply with his request?"

"Oh!" rejoined the gaoler, "I daresay I could English that; the gemman as brought this note lodged some discharges with the guv'nor down below. Mayhap you're among the lucky uns; and if so don't preach agin Providence. Howsomever I wish you joy, though I'm sorry to lose you."

Few were the arrangements which the tenant of the solitary domicile had to make on quitting his place of durance. It was as the gaoler anticipated. Amongst the warrants of discharge was that of Henry Roughton. In a few minutes he and Jane were on their way towards the poor lodging, which, now that their purse was gone,

contained their all in this world. Notwithstanding the disastrous circumstances under which Roughton found himself at large again, there was something so cheering to his English heart in the sudden re-enjoyment of liberty, that he could not repress a feeling of delight as he looked up to the clear blue vault above him illumined by the broad cheering rays of an unclouded sun, such as rarely greets us in this sea-girt isle. His step was firm as he retrode the broad pavement of the public streets; he was elated as he gazed around him on the busy crowds that thronged the thoroughfares. He felt that, like them, he was free and ready to begin the world again, with a dear-bought experience of the past, and a heart chastened by the affliction he had endured. In this almost delirious frame of mind he reached the door of Jane's long sojourn. As it opened to receive him the reaction of agonizing feeling almost overcame him; he gazed in mute dejection on the miserable hovel and its wretched furniture, and his eye rested on the marble-like face of his dear, dead child, lying in unconscious but placid loveliness. So rivetted were his thoughts on that cold lifeless form, that he was scarcely aware of the other two little ones, who, on his approach, had crept from the corner of that chamber of death, in which they had crouched in childlike timidity during the absence of their mother. He flew to the bed, and throwing his arms around the inanimate remains of his lifeless child, imprinted a thousand kisses on her cold forehead; then withdrew from the couch and wept tears of bitter sorrow. Jane thought it better to leave the strong impulse of grief to have its own course; and, with her arms around the children, sat upon the straw mattress which had served her for a bed. At length the little boy timidly sobbed—"Pa." The utterance of that magic monosyllable recalled him to himself; he drew the two children to him, and fondled

them with a wild inexplicable mixture of sorrow and delight.

Then gazing round him, he exclaimed with a choked voice—"And all this is my doing! Jane, is this the comfortable home in which you led me to believe you had found a refuge? Is that the couch on which you have sought repose, whilst I have had the luxury of a feather-bed? The living and the dead consigned to a single chamber, whilst you have ministered to my comforts! All this misery endured for me, ay, caused by me—Jane, forgive me; may Heaven forgive me too!" Jane rose and kissed his forehead, but made no other response save that which he could read in the deep and sympathizing expression of her face, wherein the intense affection of a fond confiding heart was mirrored.

CHAPTER XLII.

"Who that lives, and living thinks,
But adds another to an endless train
Of sad confessors since the world began?"—MONTGOMERY.

"Fate's dark recesses we can never find,
But fortune at some hours to all is kind."—DRYDEN.

Mr. Roughton was ushered into the room at the custom-house occupied by the solicitor, who was attended by Mr. Pugh, the gentleman who had co-operated with him in the earlier stages of the prosecutions in which Roughton had been so fatally involved. Scarcely comprehending his sudden release from prison and the object of the summons he had received, he approached the office not without a feeling of embarrassment, from which, however, he was speedily relieved on confronting the solicitor, who at once frankly addressed him—"Good morning, Mr. Roughton; your information has been useful, and what is more, careful inquiry has proved that your statements are perfectly accurate, and they are corroborated by conclusive evidence. Take a seat, take a seat, Mr. Roughton." Without giving him an opportunity of replying, the solicitor added—"The fact is, I shall require your attendance here, from day to day, for some time to come. To arrange this was the chief object of my note."

"I am much indebted to you, Sir," replied Roughton, for my timely liberation. I will do anything in my power

to serve you. I received your note at a moment of deep distress, having had the misfortune —”

“Oh yes,” interposed the solicitor, “I was sorry to hear of your loss. Your liberation had been determined upon when the tidings reached me; not a moment was lost in lodging the requisite document with the governor.”

Roughton was about to interrupt the solicitor again, by a delicate allusion to his destitute condition and the impossibility of giving the required attendance from day to day; but, as if his every thought was anticipated, the solicitor proceeded—“I fear you have not the means of subsistence, Mr. Roughton, from all I hear; but you may understand at once, that for the present a guinea a week will be allowed to you, and you may take the first instalment now if you please.”

Roughton looked at the solicitor with surprise and delight, not unmingled with painful emotion; for, although the generous announcement, thus freely volunteered, promised present relief to his starving family, whose misery and destitution he had that morning contemplated with an apprehension bordering on despair, his thoughts reverted to his lost child, whose ashes he had not the means of decently consigning to their premature grave.

“Well,” said the solicitor, observing this hesitation, and divining the cause of Roughton’s silence, “does not my proposition suit you?”

“I am deeply grateful to you, Sir,” stammered Roughton; “a guinea a week is more than has sufficed for our support since my incarceration; we might manage to subsist with less, and I appreciate it as a blessing to myself, my wife, and surviving children, but I have one who remains unburied;” and he covered his face with his hands.

“I see, I see,” said the solicitor; “you shall have an advance of five pounds on account, and the guinea a week

shall go on, until you can better afford to refund the loan. What say you?" added he, turning to Mr. Pugh.

"I quite concur," replied the latter; "we had arrived at the conclusion that Roughton had been the dupe of designing knaves; we are satisfied that he is now the witness of truth; and, as the board of customs always adopts the most lenient view of a man's case, when he takes a step in the right direction, I am sure the course you suggest will meet their approval."

"I don't doubt it—I'll risk it," observed the solicitor; "so make your mind easy on that head, Mr. Roughton. You shall take the six guineas away with you, and now let me ask another question. You know one Mr. Sharpe, an attorney—is any information from that source worthy of credit, Mr. Roughton?"

"No, Sir," was the emphatic reply.

"You would not believe him on his oath, eh?"

"No, Sir, unless it was his interest to speak the truth; and I believe, if it would serve any sinister purpose of his own, he would not hesitate to swear away the life of his own father."

"I thought as much. Do you know where he is?"

"I have heard that he is ruined and in prison for fraud or embezzlement, if not on bail."

"You are right; but the gentleman offers his testimony against all his former clients if I will interest myself to procure his liberation."

"Well, Sir, to secure his own ends I believe he would give any evidence you like—for or against anybody—guilty or innocent—and sleep none the worse for the perjury."

"I am of your opinion, Mr. Roughton; and what of Patrick Murphy? Is he to be trusted?"

"Yes, to any extent. I would trust him with untold

gold, if I had it. I do not believe he would swear a lie for all the wealth of Indies."

"Say you so? Why, didn't you hear his evidence on the trial?"

"I did, Sir, and I can satisfy you that every word he said was literally true; though I must confess that he so skilfully evaded the questions, or so gave his answers, as to lead to conclusions opposed to the facts. The truth is, Sir, he was a faithful and attached servant; and though he would not tell a lie to serve me, he would ingeniously steer clear of telling a truth which could injure me."

"I believe it, Mr. Roughton. Do you know where he is?"

"I cannot exactly say, Sir, but I could find him."

"Oh, never mind," replied the solicitor as he summoned a clerk, whom he directed to pay Roughton six guineas on account, and arrange for his future attendance; whereupon he cut the conversation short.

Mr. Roughton made his bow and retired. As he quitted the custom-house, with a heavier purse and a lighter heart than when he entered, he was hailed in the street by a familiar voice—"An' is it yer honour I see there? By the Powers it's right glad I am to see ye brathin' the free air of the blessed heav'n, I am."

"Why, Pat! is that you?" exclaimed Roughton, as he grasped the Irishman's hand with a cordial grip. "I'm right glad to meet you; but what brings you here?"

"Och! sure enough and it's a letter I got from the custom-house that brought me, an' it's not an hour since I was there and saw the commissioners myself."

"Saw the commissioners!" replied Roughton, with an incredulous tone of mixed astonishment and interrogation.

"Ay, faith an' I did, Sir, and right pleasant gentlemen they are too."

"Why, what are they like, and what did they talk about?"

"As for the likes of 'em, they're different enough for that matter, as different as fat and lean; and the leanest had the whitest head of a young 'un I iver set eyes on, and talked to me as free as wather. An' it's right little ye'd keep sacret from him too, it is; faith! an' he has sich a winnin' way wid him, he'd whistle the birds out of the bushes if needs be, an' it's a great deal I tould him of yerself, I did, and couldn't help it; lastewise he know'd all about it in the first place, and he bid me untherstand that it's no harm I'd do to yer honour by lettin' out the trut'—so I did."

"Well Pat, you're quite right about that, but you're mistaken about the gentlemen; it was not a commissioner, but the solicitor whom you saw."

"Faith, ye don't say that now, or maybe I'm done! for I'd be chary how I opened my mouth to a lawyer that way anyhow, an' I hope no harm's done."

"Not a bit of it; make your mind easy about that, and tell me where you're going?"

"Why, d'ye see, my first duty is to pay my respects to the mistress, havin' seen yerself, and it's there I was going; afther which it's a lodgin' I'll seek for the next week or two, seeing his honor, the solicitor, wants my presence, and gives me fifteen shillings a week to make sure of it."

"Then come with me, Pat, as I must look out a lodging too for the same purpose. Let us try to get under the same roof, and let me henceforth consider you as a friend, forgetting our former relation to each other."

"Your sarvent, Sir," was Pat's laconic reply, and they trudged on together, discussing the past and the present affliction, and considering how they could best minister to the comfort and consolation of Jane and the little ones, and concerting plans for the future, knowing that their retainer

at the custom-house was but precarious; added to which, Roughton was already seriously animated with the laudable desire of once more achieving independence and of redeeming, by an exemplary future, the errors of the past.

CHAPTER XLIII.

"Resigned in ev'ry state,
With patience bear, with prudence push your fate :
By suffering well, our fortune we subdue ;
Fly when she frowns, and when she calls pursue."—*DRYDEN*

IF gorgeous sable plumes nodding proudly on the velvet covered hearse, the well-appointed mourning coach crowds of hirelings bedecked in silken scarfs of snowy whiteness, glittering in magpie contrast with their somber garments—if these are the true exponents of heartfelt grief and sincere affection for the dead—then was little Jane bound to her narrow house of clay with slender evidences of sorrow and respect. But, to the passing stranger, who gazed upon the modest funeral of the departed child, the griefworn aspect and agitated mien of the humble mourners told of deep grief; of anguish more intense than the eye can realize all the pomp and pride and panoply of state, that marks the exit of the millionaire. The little maiden sleeps beneath a solitary mound of grass-grown earth. Flowers planted by a mother's hand and watered by her tears, bloom upon the lonely grave.

It is needless to dwell upon the sad offices of love that Roughton and his wife bestowed upon their departed first-born, or to trace their ramblings after more convenient lodgings for themselves and the faithful Murphy. But it is essential to dilate upon the complicated proceedings at law, by which, through the instrumentality

Roughton's information, the solicitor and his energetic friend, Mr. Pugh, succeeded in breaking up a notorious gang of receivers of contraband goods; suffice it to say, the ringleaders were convicted, fined, and imprisoned, to the great satisfaction of the honest tobaccoists, who had suffered so long from unfair competition. As the receiver of stolen goods is worse than the thief, so the purchaser of contraband goods is worse than the smuggler; and, whatever morbid sympathy is felt for the poor sailor, who perils his life and liberty to pander to the avarice of the more affluent land-lubber, who bribes him to undertake the risk, nothing short of scorn and contempt can be felt for the nefarious trader, when conviction and punishment overtake him. All this poor Roughton had experienced in his own case, but the lesson of adversity had not been lost upon him. He emerged from the horrors of a gaol to the light of liberty, a chastened and a better man. No sooner was he released from dancing attendance on the ministers of justice, whom he so usefully aided in the prosecution of the criminals who had betrayed him, and the repression of the crime to which he had been a martyr, than he resolved to begin the world again, starting with new hope, and a firm determination never again to listen to the insidious voice of the charmer, or to lend himself to anything which the dictates of conscience warned him to eschew. But it is a very difficult thing for a man, with an empty purse and a damaged character, to regain his position in society, and carry out, with stoical virtue, the laudable resolutions which he may, however sincerely, have formed in his own mind. Harry Roughton had changed the last sovereign with which he had been favoured by the Crown in return for the services he had rendered. He had neither wasted his little hoard, nor neglected to seek honourable employment, however humble; but, having only one referee to

character—his former rector—he always found, to his great mortification, that whenever he answered an advertisement, or applied for a vacant place in any respectable firm, uniformly referring to his old and sincere friend, the result was a polite rejection of his services. This was simply because, however high the general eulogium of the reverend referee in other respects, conscience would not allow that gentleman to omit the mention of the disastrous episode in Harry's life, which had rendered him a suppliant for employment, even on the most moderate terms. In these disheartening circumstances, now that he had only a few shillings in his pocket, a wife and family to care for, and no present signs of profitable occupation, the tempter tried him hard. A noted smuggler bid high for his services in his tobacco warehouse. Harry looked wistfully at the glittering bait, rendered tenfold more alluring by contrast with starvation which stared him in the face. He wavered, halting between the dictates of conscience on the one hand, and the seductions of worldly advantage on the other. Harry's integrity trembled in the balance. Had he yielded to the impulse of the moment, conscience would, probably, have kicked the beam. "When in doubt," says the gambler's oracle, "win the trick." "When conscience warns," says wisdom, "ponder ere you act." Fortunately, the latter prevailed, Harry took time to consider; nor did he, in this emergency fail to consult with her, the disregard of whose advice had entailed the ruin from which they suffered. She saw the struggle, and, with a woman's tact, resolved to commit him to a safe course. "Write," said she, "to the rector—ask his advice—whatever he recommends I shall cheerfully acquiesce in." He seized the pen and detailed, in moving terms, the painful position in which he was placed. Goaded, however, to distraction by the

apparently hopeless prospect before him, he could not refrain from expressing sentiments which drew upon him a kind but energetic reproof from the faithful minister. When that answer came he read it, handed it to his wife with a feeling of chagrin, and moodily waited the result of her perusal of it.

"Well, Harry," said she, "I think you ought not to have asked him to forego, in future, all allusion to that unhappy business. His integrity is proof against the prevailing vice of the age, with reference to servants; which, from mistaken sympathy for the place-seeker, induces the suppression of faults or facts which the employer ought to know. I agree with him that God will never desert those who place their trust in him; for, although he hides his face for a time, and tries his people in the furnace of affliction, he only waits to be gracious. It remains for us to be faithful."

"Jane," replied Harry in a deprecatory tone, as a dubious expression came over his face, "that's my last halfcrown!"

"Take it then," said Jane, "I have another; pray go and answer this advertisement in person; something seems to tell me that you will be successful this time;" and she handed him the newspaper.

He gazed abstractedly at the dazzling lines, and at length exclaimed—"Your faith is firm and strong—I ought to do it cheerfully—it will be a long walk, and I can't afford to ride." With these words he made ready for his departure; and, calculating on being back by seven o'clock in the evening, took an affectionate leave of his wife and children. He started with a comparatively light heart, meditating on the rector's letter, and the beautiful example set by Jane, of humble trust and patient submission to the divine will.

CHAPTER XLIV.

“Heav’n has to all allotted, soon or late,
Some lucky revolutions of their fate;
Whose motions, if we watch and guide with skill,
(For human good depends on human will,)
Our fortune rolls, as from a smooth descent,
And from the first impression takes the bent.”—**DRYDEN.**

It was a hot and sultry day. The sun had attained meridian height, and his scorching rays tried severely patience of the wayworn traveller. The horses whined along the dusty roads lagged lazily. Their drivers as if infected by the same slothful influences, crawled drowsily along, almost too idle to apply the whip. The humble pedestrian ever and anon wiped away the sweat and dust from his brow, or halted to rest for a few minutes on the roadside bank. Even the wild flowers nodded their many-tinted heads, and closed their flimsy and fragile petals; whilst the trees drooped in harmony, as if repining were the order of the day. Nevertheless there are exceptions to every rule, and this day was destined to furnish an illustration of that maxim.

Towards the summit of a rising ground on the road weary and solitary, a poor foot-passenger might have been seen plodding his way, when an unusual sound caught his ear. Turning round in the direction from whence it came, he saw a cloud of dust rolling rapidly towards him, heard the rapid clatter of horses’ hoofs, and, as the sound came

nearer and nearer, he observed that an open carriage was attached to the frantic animals, and that the freight consisted of a middle-aged gentleman and a very young lady; the latter, pale as a lily, but as composed and calm to all appearance as if nothing were the matter; whilst the former exhibited in his countenance intense anxiety, but no lack of presence of mind; for he was busily occupied with whip and rein in the management of his steeds, which were evidently and, to all human probability, irreclaimably running away. These observations, of course, would only be the effort of a moment; the next brought the infuriated animals within a few paces of the astonished pedestrian. His course was resolved upon in an instant. By the side of one of the horses trailed a broken rein. At his head the traveller dashed, and, seizing the bridle, whilst the charioteer tugged at the remaining rein, the courageous fellow was dragged along the road some forty or fifty paces, tenaciously holding on, in spite of pain and bruises, until the two animals came to a stand, within three or four yards of the crown of the hill. Had they once passed the summit and whirled down the descent, nothing short of a miracle could have saved the travellers from destruction. They were, however, safe; the gentleman alighted; the peril was over; and the lady had fainted away.

"Can you hold the horses a moment, whilst I go to my daughter's assistance?" asked he eagerly, as he observed her head drooping over the side of the curricule.

"I think I can," was the reply; and, seizing the bits of both horses, he held on until the gentleman had, on discovering some signs of reanimation, gently lifted out the young lady and placed her on the greensward. The gentleman then returned to his horses, and commenced a temporary reparation of the broken reins. Whilst thus occupied, his eye fell upon the countenance of the poor

fellow who had come so opportunely to the rescue; and not only observed the deathly pallor of his cheek, and other symptoms of acute pain, but that he was supporting himself on one leg.

"I fear you are hurt," said he feelingly.

"Not seriously; only a few slight bruises, and, I am afraid, a sprained ankle."

"I think I can safely trust my horses," replied the gentleman, "after the hard breathing they have had; and the rein is secure enough now. You must, therefore, allow me to assist you into the carriage, and accompany me to the next inn."

It was vain to refuse the proffered help, for he could not walk. He was fain, therefore, to take his seat in the carriage by the side of the young lady, and also to hold the reins; for, despite the sultriness of the day, and the fatigue and excitement he had undergone, the gentleman would not leave the horses' heads, but insisted on walking by the side of them, though the distance was several miles.

During this time the young lady, who had regained her composure, showed symptoms of the return of that rosy tint which adds such a charm to the beautiful features of youth; and her loquacity revived with it. So adroitly did she interrogate her companion, in whose manners and conversation she discovered something more than his threadbare and shabby genteel appearance seemed to indicate, that before they reached their halting-place, she had elicited his whole history. The roadside inn was gained, some suitable refreshment served up, and a comfortable bed put in requisition for the invalid. Medical aid was sent for, against which no arguments that the sick man could adduce were of any avail. After expressing the deep sense of gratitude he felt, the stranger took his leave, promising to return in the morning. The medical man

had prescribed and departed. A potent mixture had been administered. Overcome by pain, fatigue, and opiates, the patient fell into a deep sleep, which lasted several hours; when he awoke, and wondered, after a delirious dream, where he was, and how he came there! As the events of the day came back to his wandering thoughts, and the appearance of the golden rays, which dimly illumined his chamber, told him it was near nightfall, he suddenly turned to consult his watch, and as suddenly recollected that that article had been some time since consigned to the care of a certain worthy who rejoices in the appellation of "uncle." The fleeting vision of the three golden balls reminded him of those for whose sake that and many similar sacrifices had been made—of the object of his day's journey, thus strangely frustrated—of his promise to return home by seven o'clock that evening, whereas it was now nearly ten at night—of the anxiety his wife would suffer on his account—of the disappointment it would be to her to learn that his mission had so fatally failed; and of the impossibility at that hour, penniless as he almost was, of despatching a messenger to relieve her suspense. Everything seemed to thwart his schemes and annihilate his hopes. In a momentary feeling of bitterness he exclaimed—

"The fates appear to conspire against Harry Roughton, and there is nothing for him but disappointment and despair!"

He sank into a fit of despondency, which at length again gave way to the influence of narcotics, and sleep closed his eyelids.

The drowsy hours rolled on. Midnight was long past. The latest revellers were preparing to retire. Roughton still slept on, but not easily; confused dreams flitted through his brain. An indefinite idea that he was mixed up inextricably in some sudden brawl or riot was occupy-

ing his busy imagination, probably created by what was going on below; for, half awaking from his feverish slumber, his ear caught the electrifying sound of a well-known voice shouting in a high key—

“By the Powers see him I will; an’ sure enough the doctor’s orthers to keep him quiet ’ll be betther attended to whin he claps his eyes on me, than by shuttin’ him up there—lasteways it ’ll relave his onaisy mind, it will.”

“But,” remonstrated the landlord, “you don’t know that it’s the person you’re seeking for.”

“Maybe I don’t; but sure enough I am it is; an’ jist a peep at him ’ud set that matther at rest in no time.”

“Bless me,” interrupted the chambermaid, who stood at the foot of the stairs, “that’s number fifteen’s bell, I declare; the gentleman must be awake; and before she had finished the sentence, Roughton’s half-choked voice was heard at the top of the stairs—“Pat, my good fellow, is that you? Come up here;” and off bounded Pat, upsetting the maid and her candle, guided only by the sound, as he blundered up stairs in the dark, and found himself in Roughton’s arms.

“A light here, ho! don’t ye hear?” cried Pat. The landlord was quickly on the spot, and assisting to remove the patient to his bed again; for, in his haste to welcome poor Murphy, he had forgotten for the instant his sprained ankle and bruised limbs, and could scarcely have crawled back without help. “An’ all this,” cried Pat, “comes of their previntin’ me paying me respects to yer honor at onst, for I knew it was yourself, I did. Maybe ye’ll rest a bit, an’ thin I’ll tell ye what brought me here, I will.”

The room was soon cleared of all but Roughton and his faithful Pat, who would not budge from the bedside. Having regained a little ease, he eagerly pressed Pat with inquiries about Jane and the children, and the reason of his appearance there.

"Let it alone," says Pat, "an' be aisy now, and I'll tell it all in me own way, I will. Don't ye see, at seven ye were to ha' bin' back, an' ye didn't, an' whin eight o'clock, and then nine and ten in their turns came, the missus, God bless her, had lost all heart. Comfort she wouldn't abide. The big tears stood in her eyes, they did, an' she hoped the best, while she feared the worst; and the devil put a thought in her swate mind that I couldn't stand no-how, I couldn't; for, says she, 'I fear he has been disappointed again to-day, and what despair may have driven him to I dare not contemplate;' and she wrung her hands and took on so, that, says I, first, says I, don't cry, but make yerself aisy; and, secondly, says I, it's off I'am goin' and I'll not be back till I find him; and wid that same I took the way yer honor wint in the mornin', hopin' I'd mate ye every minit; an' tired I was whin I got here to rest a bit, not knowin' that yerself was under the same roof at all; but I heard 'em talk of the sick gin'llman up stairs, an' the time o' day whin he came in hurt; and me own conscience tould me that Masther Roughton was not the man to dhrown himself. So, says I, it's the man I want, an' it's see him I will, an' I would, too, in spite of all their blarney. And that was the cause of the row ye heard. So make yerself aisy now, an' I'll bid ye good-night, since the missus 'll nayther know what's sleep nor pace o' mind, she won't, till it's safe she knows ye are."

Having delivered himself of this speech, Pat took his leave, without much reluctance on the part of Roughton; who well knew what a weight would be removed from his wife's mind by tidings of his safety. He knew the faithful Pat would cheerfully trudge back every step of the way, rather than prolong her suspense by taking a few hours' repose himself. As soon as Pat had closed the door after him, Roughton gave himself up to sleep, and did not

awake again until a late hour in the morning; when, aroused by the gentle pressure of a hand upon his forehead, he raised his eyes and beheld those of his faithful wife, gazing intently into his face. Many were the explanations which ensued. Notwithstanding numberless cautions from Jane to her husband not to fatigue and excite himself by talking, an incessant dialogue was kept up, in which she irresistibly played her part. The whole story of the fruitless journey, the accident which had rendered it abortive, the probability of Roughton being unable even to travel in search of employment for some time to come, much less perform it if obtained; and the conviction that a fatality hung over all his efforts to recover his lost position, preyed upon his mind. The reflection that the day before they had divided their last crown-piece between them, rendered their prospect cheerless enough to contemplate; but Jane would hear nothing of the doctrine of fate and ill-luck; insisting, in the face of all these crosses and misfortunes, that everything is overruled for good to those who put their trust in the great Disposer of events. Stiff and sore, still smarting from his bruises, and somewhat weak and feeble, Roughton felt no little difficulty in struggling against that despondency which it was Jane's delight to combat; but, in the midst of her endeavours to soothe him, they were interrupted by a tap at the door. Jane opened it. A tall gentlemanlike person, bowing politely, inquired after the invalid, and asked if it were convenient for him to enter. Supposing it to be the doctor, of whose kind attentions Harry had spoken, she ushered him in at once; but only to discover the next moment, that it was the gentleman whose unruly horses had given rise to her Harry's confinement to a sickbed. She thought, too, notwithstanding the courtesy of his behaviour towards her, that he would prefer being left alone with her husband, and was about to retire,

when the gentleman politely stepped forward and inquired whether he had not the pleasure of speaking to Mrs. Roughton? Being answered in the affirmative, he said—"Then do allow me to introduce you to my daughter, who waits in the adjoining room." Leaving the two ladies together he returned to Roughton's bedside, and, after a few introductory observations, he said—"I have learnt the whole of your history from my daughter. It singularly happens that I am personally acquainted with Mr. Jamieson, the clergyman of whom you spoke. You have met with your present misfortune in your zeal to save me and my daughter. I feel fully sensible that we owe our preservation, humanly speaking, to your praiseworthy courage and presence of mind. I also feel that it is my duty to make you every amends in my power for the injury and inconvenience you suffer on our account." Roughton blushed, and was about to reply that he had simply done his duty, and could not accept of anything at his hands; but the gentleman interrupted him—"My good friend, do not misunderstand me—let me come to the point at once; I am a man of business myself, and, curiously enough, I was looking out for just such a person as yourself to manage one of my country establishments; and, as you were probably prevented, through me, from obtaining the situation you were in pursuit of, the least I can do is to offer you mine, with an assurance that we shall not disagree as to the terms. My daughter is interested in your story. I doubt not by this time she is on good terms with your wife, who, if I may judge from appearances, and on so slight an acquaintance, is as amiable as she looks." Harry was overcome by this unexpected kindness, and could only convey his thanks by the unmistakable expression of gratitude which was portrayed in his countenance, as his generous benefactor quietly retired from the room.

Harry wished he could have recalled his new friend, that he might pour into his ear the grateful feelings with which his heart overflowed; but he was gone, and Harry was left to his meditations. Thus absorbed, and unconscious of all around, he was startled to hear a voice close to his ear; and turning his head, he beheld the sparkling blue eyes of his darling Jane gazing earnestly through the curtains. Although she had already learned the particulars from the frank yet delicate communications of the amiable daughter, she could not refrain from seeking to hear Harry's version of what had passed between him and the father, that they might exchange their heartfelt mutual gratulations. "Well, Harry!" said she, after a pause, "I have often told you that out of evil comes good. Blessings fall upon us when we least expect them. God is gracious. His ways are not our ways; and, what we are prone to view as a calamity, turns out to be the harbinger of better things."

Harry gave an assenting smile, as he could not but realize in the recent event, a signal instance of that good providence which his perversity under trial had often led him to doubt. Passing over the days and hours of convalescence, the rest is soon told. Installed once more in a comfortable home, with an adequate stipend, a confiding and benevolent employer, a good prospect before him—a new scene of industry and happiness dawned on the long-tried pair.

CHAPTER XLV.

"A spark of virtue, by the deepest shade
Of sad adversity, is fairer made."—WALLER.

"BLESS me!" exclaimed Jane as she raised her eyes from her needlework, on observing a shadow cross the window; "Why Harry! that's the rector, I declare! Who'd have thought it?" Down went Harry's book. They were at the door in an instant, each seizing a hand of the worthy rector, who gazed at them with his accustomed benevolent smile; and, still retaining the friendly grasp of his old parishioners, marched between them into the cheerful sitting-room. The history of his visit to that locality, which he could not quit without seeing them, was soon explained. The varied incidents which had occurred since Harry's unhappy exit from his native town were rapidly passed in review.

"Ah! well," said Harry, with a satisfied air, "I've been my own worst enemy; but we are very comfortable and happy now, notwithstanding all we've gone through." The rector looked blank. Harry repeated, merely varying the phrase—"Yes, I have been the greatest enemy to myself; but—"

Here the rector interposed—"Lay not the flattering unction to your soul which that hackneyed phrase implies. It is only the charitable gloss with which friends sometimes

seek to palliate the indiscretions of reformed rakes, or apologize for the departed victims of intemperance and vice; and which we sometimes apply to ourselves when returning from our crooked courses. A man is seldom an enemy to himself without being so to others; an inference which, in the general acceptation of that phrase, is too apt to be ignored."

Harry, somewhat taken aback, sought to illustrate his position by reference to his own pecuniary losses, and to the fact, creditable in itself, that he had already entered on the liquidation of the pecuniary liabilities which he left undischarged when he bid adieu to his once happy home.

"True, true," replied the rector; "I heartily commend your honesty, but to give a man credit for what he ought to do is only negative praise. A man may discharge the claims of his common creditors, and yet owe a debt to society of which he is not so easily absolved. Can you lay your hand upon your heart and say with self-complacency, not merely that you owe no man a shilling, but that you have made due reparation for, and stand acquitted of all the evil which your past conduct has brought upon others as well as yourself? Pitt still walks the streets with uneasy gait and haggard look; his wan and furrowed face, his restless and suspicious eye, tell the painful story of never-ceasing inward strife; of a conscience ill at ease; of fearful retribution yet to come in this world or the next. His poverty-stricken aspect furnishes a sad commentary on the instability of the world's ill-gotten gain. This may be the just punishment of the many vices, the many crimes, in which he was the chief actor; and in some of which you, though the dupe it may be of your late associate in crime rather than the originator, were a guilty participator."

Here Roughton again interrupted the rector, but the latter stopped him—"Nay, I anticipate what you would say, but can you say as much of the discarded Cinderow, upon whose cupidity you practised, and whose compliance ruined *him* without benefiting *you*? I have reason to believe that this was not his first departure from the line of duty; but the case in which he became involved with *you* was the immediate cause of his destruction. Cashiered and turned adrift, shut out for ever from a service of which he might have been an honourable member, he lives on the bounty of others, a stranger to the balm which conscious rectitude imparts amidst "the ills which flesh is heir to." Swiveleye is the beggared inmate of a workhouse—a passing shadow of what he was! His cunning and astute intellect has succumbed and given place to vacant imbecility—a species of living death—which unhappily supervened without a sign of repentance, or a ray of hope. Of Golightly, who so suddenly disappeared before your capture, I can say nothing, except that well-founded rumour has consigned him to an untimely end. Poor Jones, the fisherman, who fell a victim to his indiscretion in visiting his old comrade Marsloops, on board the vessel which your ill-fated cargo condemned, whilst it unhappily implicated him, died in poverty of a broken heart! You know that he was innocent of any participation in that fraudulent adventure. Mundy's once flourishing business, lost by long incarceration in a gaol, failed to support him when restored to liberty. Reduced to the contemptible level of the petty smuggler, adding crime to crime, he is slowly filling up his cup of misery. Of Marsloops I know nothing. Of the fate of old Jem and Wakeful, who suffered on the gallows, you know as much as I do. Oh! Mr. Roughton—If you, and such as you, had not, by your money and your example, encouraged these men, particularly the humbler of them,

in such nefarious occupations, some of them, at least, who have lost cast and character and honest employment, whilst they have acquired a knowledge of, and a thirst for, irregular pursuits, might, humanly speaking, at this moment have been decent members of society, honestly pursuing their respective proper callings. Have you then nothing to answer for beyond mere pecuniary short-comings? Ask yourself whether you feel that your conscience is purged from the guilt and responsibility of having contributed, by your countenance and participation, to the cumulation of this dark catalogue of misery and degradation?"

Roughton, who had listened with all the anguish of a convicted and awakened sinner, to the rector's brief but truthful summary of crime and its consequences, cast down his eyes abashed and confounded by the reflections it excited. He felt that it was no exaggerated picture. Memory, despite every struggle to banish her unwelcome resuscitations, remorselessly recalled a thousand half-forgotten incidents connected with his past career. Accomplices in crime, who had played only subordinate parts in the drama, and who had learned, perhaps, their first lessons under the chief actors, rose up as witnesses against him!

Although retributive justice had overtaken, ay, well-nigh extirpated the ringleaders of the unholy band, he felt, for the first time, the appalling conviction in all its force, that the germs of social mischief, so recklessly sown, were fraught with evils more injurious and more lasting than he had ever dreamed of, and that the sin lay at his door. The bitter pangs of compunction and remorse for a time overpowered his utterance. At length he raised his eyes, gazed hopelessly at the face of the rector, and exclaimed—"I have sinned more grievously than I thought; and the

conviction that many of the evils that I have committed are irremediable overwhelms me with despair!"

"Not so, not so," replied the rector; "the door of mercy is not barred against the returning sinner! God is gracious—seek his forgiveness with true contrition of heart, and pray earnestly for the comfort of the holy spirit and for divine guidance. Remember that, although you have been instrumental in bringing about the sad evils which I have recalled to your mind, the supreme disposer of events overrules the actions of all, even the most sinful of his creatures, for wise and good purposes. But, as 'His ways are not our ways,' and 'His thoughts are past finding out' by the erring light of human wisdom, let us not pause now to inquire into the inscrutable designs of providence; but remember that God is faithful, and that those who call on him He will in nowise cast out. All I wished was to warn you against the spirit of self-righteousness, upon which so many have made shipwreck, not to cast you into the slough of despond without hope of redemption. It is a wholesome exercise to recall the past, and contemplate the evil you have done—the sins to be repented of. Your own reflections tell you that the outline which I drew comprehended not all the mischief incident to your misdeeds. You have passed through a fiery ordeal, through much tribulation. Snatched, as it were, like a brand from the burning, you have escaped the fate which has overwhelmed your ungodly associates. Some of them have disappeared from the scene, leaving wives and children friendless, homeless, helpless, pennyless; ay! each leaving in his own circle the contaminating influence of evil example, whose mischiefs may be incalculable, for sin is infectious. But I will not dwell on these details, though, if searched out and followed through their various ramifications, they might exhaust a volume to relate. I only

advert to them now to illustrate the solemn truth that the sin of one man may be the bane of many! and when human frailty lures us from the paths of rectitude, who shall presume to estimate the length and breadth and depth of misery to which our erring steps may lead ourselves as well as others."

The good rector's homily was not thrown away upon Harry Roughton. He rose from the friendly infliction a better man. The benevolent pastor lived to see the happy fruit of his exhortations manifested in the life and conduct of his once-erring disciple. Faith, hope, and love, characteristics of Jane's confiding nature, had been her solace in many a trying hour, a light that never failed her in adversity and which though perhaps conversely to the general rule, shone even more brightly in prosperity. She now found unspeakable happiness in contemplating the growth in her Harry's heart of that true piety which throws a cheering lustre over the Christian's pathway through this vale of tears.

The loss of little Jane had been replaced by other little smiling faces, in addition to those who had been spared when the hand of affliction almost threatened them with annihilation.

The pretty cottage which now sheltered Roughton and his family, if not a paradise on earth, was as happy a home as the frail children of mortality could reasonably hope to enjoy in this land of pilgrimage, where no continuing city is.

Schooled by adversity and chastened by affliction, Harry Roughton realized the salutary truth, that a modest competency, honourably earned and rationally enjoyed, confers more solid pleasure than wealth, without moral rectitude, could purchase or bestow. He endeavoured faithfully to inculcate, by precept and example, the wholesome lessons

he had learned. Self-righteousness no longer maintained its ascendancy in his breast. He neither denied nor palliated the errors of his former ways; and, when his neighbours sought his guidance and counsel in doubt or difficulty, he failed not to raise an emphatic warning voice against the insidious suggestions of evil, frankly concluding his admonitions with his familiar aphorism—“Eschew evil, and learn to do good; honesty is the best policy, for I have tried them both.”

THE END.



2020 11 1

Under the Patronage



of Her Majesty.

Now Publishing, in imperial octavo, Illustrated by a Series of Portraits, beautifully Engraved on Steel, Copied from Original and Authentic Sources by the First Artists of the Day.

THE
IMPERIAL DICTIONARY OF UNIVERSAL BIOGRAPHY:

A SERIES OF

ORIGINAL MEMOIRS OF DISTINGUISHED MEN OF ALL AGES AND ALL NATIONS.

BY WRITERS OF EMINENCE IN THE VARIOUS BRANCHES OF LITERATURE,
SCIENCE, AND ART.

CONDUCTED BY

Professor JOHN EADIE, D.D., LL.D.

Professor J. P. NICOL, LL.D.

JOHN FRANCIS WALLER, Esq., LL.D.

P. E. DOVE, Esq., General Editor.

EDWIN LANKESTER, Esq., M.D., F.R.S.

Professor FRANCIS BOWEN, LL.D.,

Editor of "North American Review."

J. BROWN, Esq., Corresponding Editor.

THIS Work is being published in Parts at Two Shillings, and in Divisions, cloth, Seven Shillings and Sixpence; each Part containing Sixty-four Pages of Letterpress and Two Portraits; and each Division containing One Hundred and Ninety-two Pages of Letterpress and Six Portraits. The Portraits, engraved on steel, are copied from original and authentic sources, and executed in the highest style by some of the first artists of the day. To give additional interest to the Work, Biographical Sketches of eminent individuals still *living* are inserted. These are distinguished by an asterisk before their names. The initials of the contributor are appended to all the more important articles.

Now Publishing, in imperial octavo, in Parts at 1s., and in Divisions, cloth gilt, 10s. 6d. each, Illustrated by nearly 1000 Engravings on Wood, And Embellished with a Series of Portraits of Distinguished Chemists.

CHEMISTRY,
THEORETICAL, PRACTICAL, AND ANALYTICAL,

AS APPLIED AND RELATING TO

THE ARTS AND MANUFACTURES.

By DR. SHERIDAN MUSPRATT, F.R.S.E., M.R.I.A.,

Founder and Principal of the College of Chemistry, Liverpool; Honorary Fellow of the New York College of Pharmacy; Fellow of the Royal Agricultural Society of England; Membre de la Société D'Encouragement; Membre de l'Académie Nationale de France; Author of Outlines of Analysis; Chemistry of Vegetation; Influence of Chemistry; and Editor of Muspratt's Plattner on the Blowpipe, &c. &c.

DEDICATED TO BARON DUMAS AND SIR ROBERT KANE.

THE Work will be completed in about Fifty Shilling Parts, each containing Thirty-two Pages, and every alternate Part will be enriched with a Portrait of some distinguished Chemist. The Illustrations embrace every branch of the Arts and Manufactures, and are intrusted to the most competent hands. No expense is being spared to render every department as perfect as the importance of the various subjects, and the existing condition of human acquirements, will admit.

WILLIAM MACKENZIE,
22 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON; 45 & 47 HOWARD STREET, GLASGOW;
39 SOUTH BRIDGE, EDINBURGH.

PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION,

Illustrated by upwards of 300 Wood-cuts and a Series of highly-finished Engravings, drawn by C. Landseer, F. O. Finch, and other Artists; and coloured from Nature, or from Specimens in the British Museum, under the immediate superintendence of the Authors.

THE

MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY;

BEING A POPULAR ACCOUNT OF THE

STRUCTURE, HABITS, AND CLASSIFICATION OF THE VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS OF THE

ANIMAL KINGDOM:

QUADRUPEDS, BIRDS, REPTILES, FISHES, SHELLS, AND INSECTS,

INCLUDING THE INSECTS DESTRUCTIVE TO AGRICULTURE.

BY

SIR JOHN RICHARDSON, C.B., F.R.S. LOND., HON. F.R.S. EDIN.,

Author of the *Fauna Borealis*; *Arctic Search* after Sir John Franklin.

WILLIAM S. DALLAS, F.L.S., &c.

Curator of York Museum; Author of *Treatise on Zoology*; *Elements of Entomology*, &c. &c.

AND

WILLIAM BAIRD, M.D., F.L.S.,

&

ADAM WHITE, Esq.,

Author of *Natural History of British Entomostraca*;
Cyclopædia of the Natural Sciences, &c.

Author of popular *Treatises on Zoology*
Insecta, *Crustacea*, &c.

CURATORS IN THE ZOOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

THE Work will be published in Imperial Octavo, and completed in about Twenty Parts, at Two Shillings, each Part containing Five Plates and Thirty-two Pages of Letterpress, profusely illustrated by Wood Engravings. The Coloured Plates and Wood Engravings constitute one of the most striking and important features of this work; their accuracy is insured by the subjects having been engraved from Drawings by C. LANDSEER, F. O. FINCH, and other eminent Artists; and coloured from Nature, or from specimens in the collection of the British Museum, under the immediate superintendence of the Authors. For beauty of execution and scientific accuracy, the illustrations of this Work are equalled by few, even of the most expensive plates of Zoological subjects, whilst they cannot be compared for a moment with those which usually accompany popular works.

In Active Preparation, to be Published in One Volume, Demy 8vo, Illustrated by nearly 300 Engravings on Wood,

THE

TEXT-BOOK OF THE TELEGRAPH;

BEING A COMPLETE ACCOUNT, HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE,

OF THE

ELECTRO-MAGNETIC, ELECTRO-CHEMICAL, & MAGNETO-ELECTRIC TELEGRAPHS.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A HISTORICAL TREATISE ON FRICTIONAL AND VOLTAIC ELECTRICITY, ELECTRO-MAGNETISM, AND THERMAL AND MAGNETO-ELECTRICITY.

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE OLD SEMAPHORE, AND THE VARIOUS METHODS OF TELEGRAPHING BY SIGNALS FROM THE EARLIEST TIME.

By GEORGE BLAIR, M.A.

THE Work will be illustrated by Two or Three Hundred First-class Engravings, now in course of preparation under the immediate superintendence of a gentleman who has been long practically acquainted with the whole subject; and while it is hoped that it will be found highly interesting to the general reader, even as a mere narrative or history of the progress of discovery in this direction, till it culminated in one of the greatest scientific triumphs of modern times, it is likewise intended to be invested with so much of a practical character that persons actually engaged in the working of the telegraph will find in it what its title implies—a useful Text-book for Reference.

WILLIAM MACKENZIE:

22 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON; 45 & 47 HOWARD STREET, GLASGOW;
39 SOUTH BRIDGE, EDINBURGH.





